

OF THE  
FOLLOWING  
OF CHRIST.

*Deuided into foure Bookes*

WRITTEN  
In Latin by the Learned  
and Deuout man  
THOMAS A KEMPIS  
Chanon Regular of the  
Order of S. Augustine.

AND  
*Translated into English  
by F. B.*



By IOHN HEIGHAM.

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FORBOWING  
OF CHIST

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WRIITEN

In Latin by the Venerable

and Reverend

THOMAS A. R. M. S. S.

Chaplain of the

Order of St. Benedict

and

Translating into English

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OF THE  
FOLLOWING  
OF CHRIST.

*The first Booke.*

*Of the Imitation of Christ,  
and contempt of all the Vanities of the World.*

C H A P T. I.

**H**E that followeth me,  
walketh not in dark-  
nesse, saith our Lord.  
These are the words  
of Christ, by which we are ad-  
monished, that we ought to imi-  
tate his life, and manners, if we  
will be partakers of his diuine  
light, and be deliuered from all  
blind.

4

*The following*

blindnesse of hart. Let therefore our chieft care be to meditate vpon the life of Iesus Christ.

2. The doctrine of Christ exceedeth all the doctrine of the Saints: and he that had the light of spirit, would discouer therein a secret & hidden Manna. But it fallerh out that many, who oftē heare the Ghospell of Christ, do yet feele in themselues but slender motion of any holy desire, because they are void of the spirit of Christ. But whosoever wil fully and feelingly vnderstand the wordes of Christ, must endeavour to conforme his life wholly to the life of Christ.

3. What will it auaille thee, to dispute profoundly of the Trinitie, if thou be voyd of humilitie, and therby displeasing to the Trinitie? Highe wordes, surely, make a man neither holy nor iust; but a vertuous life maketh him deare to God. I had rather feele compunction, then vnder-

of Christ. Lib. I. 5

stand the definition thereof. If thou didest knowe the whole Bible by harte, and the sayinges of all the Philosophers . what would all that profit thee, without charity , and the grace of God ? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but only to loue God, & wholly to serue him. This is the highest wisdom, by con-  
cept of the worlde, to tend towards the Kingdome of heauen.

4. It is therefore vanity, to seeke after fading riches, and to repose trust in them . It is also vanity , to gape after honours, and to climbe to highe degrees. It is vanity to follow the appetites of the flesh , and to labour for that , for which thou must afterwarde suffer more grievous punishments . Vanity it is, to wish to liue long, and to be carelesse to liue well. It is vanity to minde only this present life, and not to foresee

— you

A 3

those

those things which are to come. It is vanity to sett thy loue on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither, where euerlasting ioy is permanent.

5. Call often to minde this prouerbe: That the eye is neuer satisfied with seeing, nor the eare filled with hearing. Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy hart from the affection of visible things, and to turne thy selfe to the inuisible. For they that follow their sensuality, doe staine their owne consciences, & loose the grace of God.

*Of the humble conceipt of  
our selues.*

## CHAPT. II.

**A**ll men by nature desire to know: but what auaileth know-



of Christ. Lib. I.

knowledg without the feare of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that feareth God, is better then a proud Philosopher that neglecting himselfe, labourereth to vnderstand the course of the heauens. Who so knowerh himselfe well, groweth daily more contemptible in his owne conceipt, and delighteth not in the praises of men. If I vnderstood all that is to be knowne in the world, and were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will iudge according to my deedes?

2.<sup>e</sup> Giue not thy selfe to inordinate desire of knowledg: for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seeme so to others, and to be accompted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soule: and he is very vnwise, that bestoweth his labour about other things.



**B** . The following  
things, then those that may  
auaile him for the health of his  
soule. Many words do not satisfy  
the desires of the harte: but a  
good life comforteth the mind,  
& a pure conscience giueth great  
assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou  
knowest, and how much the  
better thou vnderstandest, so  
much the more grievously shalt  
thou therefore be iudged, vnlesse  
thy life be also more holy. Be  
not therefore extolled in thy  
owne mind for any art or sciēce  
which thou knowest; but rather  
let the knowledge giuen thee,  
make thee more fearefull. If  
thou thinkest that thou vnder-  
standest and knowest much,  
know also, that there be many  
things more, which thou know-  
est not. Thinke not too well of  
thy self, but rather confesse thine  
ignorance. Why wilt thou pre-  
fer thy selfe before others, sith  
there

of Christ. Lib. I. 9

there be manie more learned & skilfull in the Law then thou? If thou wilt knowe or learne any thing profitable, desire not to be knowne, and to be little esteemed of by men.

4. The highest & most profitable reading, is the true knowledge and consideration of our selues. It is great wisdom and perfectiō, to esteeme nothing of our selues, and to thinke alwaies well, and cōmendably of others. If thou shouldest see another openly sinne, or commit any heynous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteeme the better of thy selfe, for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remaine in good estate. We are all frayle, but thou oughtest to esteeme none more frayle then thy selfe.

*Of the doctrine of Truth.*

## CHAPT. III

**H** Appy is he whom Truth by it selfe doth teach, not by figures, and voices that passe away; but as it is in it selfe. Our owne opinion and sense do often deceaue vs, and it discernes little. What auaieth it to dispute and contend about darke and hidden things, whereas for being ignorant of them, we shal not so much as once be reprehended at the day of iudgment? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and necessary, and giue our minds to that which is curious and hurtfull: we haue eyes and doe not see.

2. And what haue we to do with the termes & distinctions of Logicians? He to whom the  
Eter-

of Christ. Lib. I. 12

Eternall Word speaketh, is deliuered from multitudes and diuersities of opinions. By that one Word al things do speake, and all declare the same: and this is the beginning, and that which speaketh vnto vs. No man without that Word, vnderstandeth or iudgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, who draweth all things, to one, and seeth all things in one, may enioy a quiet mind, and remaine peaceable in God. O God, the eternall Truth, make me one with thee in euermlasting charity. It is tedious to me often to read & heare many things. In thee is all that I would haue, and can desire. Let all Doctours hold their peace: let all creatures be silent in thy sight: speak thou alone vnto me.

3. How much the more one is retired within himselfe, and becommeth inwardly sincere, and pure: so much the more, and  
higher

higher mysteries doth he vnderstand without labour: for that he receaueth light of vnderstanding from aboue. A pure, sincere and stayed spirit, is not distracted, though he be imploied in many workes: for that he worketh all to the honour of God, and laboureth for inwarde tranquillity, without seeking himsele in any thing he doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more, then the vnmortified desires of thine owne harte? A good and deuout man, first of all dispolet in himselfe his outward works: neither do they draw him to the desires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth the to the prescript of reason. Who hath a greater combate, then he that laboureth to ouercom himself? This ought to be our endeauour, to conquer our selues daily, to wax stronger, and be more able to subdue our passions, and alwaies in this way



way to get some ground.

4. All perfection in this life, hath some imperfections mixt with it : and no knowledge of ours is voide of darknesse, and ignorance. An humble knowledg of thy selfe is a more secure way to God, then a deepe search after learning : yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the only knowledg of any thing whatsoever is to be disliked, it being good in it selfe, and ordained by God: but a good conscience, and a vertuous life, is to be preferred before it. And for that many endeanour, rather to gett knowledg, then to liue well, therfore they are oftē deceiued, and reape either none, or very slender profit of their labours.

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, & planting of vertues, as they doe in moouing doubts & questions, neither would there  
for



soe much hurt be done, nor soe great scandall be giuen in the world, nor so much loosnes be practised in places erected for vertue! Truly at the day of Iudgment, we shall not be examined what we haue read, but what we haue done: nor how wel we haue spoken, but how vertuouslie we haue liued. Tell me now, where are all those great Doctors and Maisters, with whom thou wast so well acquainted, whilst they liued and flourished in learning? Now others possesse their liuings, & perhaps do scarce euer thinke of them. In their life time they seemed something, and now they are not spoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of this world passe away! Would God their life had byn answerable to their learning, the had their study and reading byn to good purpose. How many perish in this world by reason  
of

of vaine learning, who take little care of the seruice of God? And because they rather choose to be great then humble: therefore they vanish away in their owne thoughts. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is truly great, that is little in himselfe, and that maketh no accōpt of the height of honour. He is truly wise, that accompteth all earthly thinges as dung, that he may gaine Christ. And he is truly learned, that fulfilleth the will of Christ, and forsaketh his owne.

*Of Prudence, and Foresight in  
our actions.*

CHAPT. IV.

**W**E must not giue care to euery suggestion or instinct, but ought warily, & leasurely to ponder things according to the will of God. But (alas) such is  
our

16      *The following*

our weakenesse, that wee rather often beleieve, and speake euill of others, then good. Those that are perfectly vertuous, do not easily giue credit to euery thing that is told them, for they know that humane frailty is prone to euill, and very subiect to faile in words.

2. It is great wisdome not to be rash in thy proceedings, nor to stand stiffly in thine owne conceits; as also not to beleieve euery thing which thou hearest: nor presently to relate againe to others, what thou hast heard, or doost beleieve. Consult with him that is wise and of a good conscience, and seeke to be instructed by a better then thy selfe, rather then to follow thine owne inuentions. A good life maketh a man wise according to God, & giueth him experiēce in many things. How much the hubler one is in himself, & more  
subiect

subject & resigned vnto God: so much the more prudent shall he be in all his affaires, and enioy greater peace and quiet of hart.

*Of the reading of holy  
Scriptures.*

CHAPT. V.

**T**Ruth, not eloquence is to be sought for in holy Scriptures. Each part of them is to be read with the same spirit it was made. We should rather search after spirituall profit in Scriptures, then subtilty of speach. We ought to read deuout and simple bookes, as willingly as high and learned. Let not the reputation of the writer offend thee, whether he be of great or small learning: but let the pure word of truth moue thee to read. Search not who speake this, or that, but marke what is spoken.

2. Men passe away, but the

**B**

truth

truth of our Lord remaineth for ever. God speaketh vnto vs sundry waies, without respect of persons. Our owne curiosity often hindreth vs in reading of the Scriptures, when as we will examine, and discusse that which we should rather passe ouer without more adoe. If thou desire to reape profit, read humbly, plainly, and faithfully: neuer desire the estimation of learning. Inquire willingly, & heare with silence the words of holy men: dislike not the Parables of Elders, for they are not recounted without cause.

*Of inordinate Desires, and Affections.*

CHAPT. VI.

**W**hensoever a man desireth any thing inordinatly, he is presently disquieted in himselfe. The proud and couetous can  
neuer



never rest. The poore and humble in spirit, liue together in all peace. The mā that is not wholly dead in himsele, is quickly tēpted, and ouercome in small and trifling thinges. The weake in spirit, and that is yet in a maner subiect to his appetites, and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himsele altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to retire himsele frō thē: and easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of conscience, for that he yielded to his passion, which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quiet of minde therefore, is gotte by resisting our passiōs, not by obeying them. There is no peace



20      *The following*

in the hart of a carnall man, nor  
of him that is addicted to out-  
ward things, but in the spiritual  
and feruent.

*Of flying vaine Hope, & Pride.*

CHAPT. VII.

**H**E is vaine that putteth his  
trust in men, or creatures.  
Be not ashamed to serue others,  
for the loue of Iesus Christ: nor  
to be esteemed poore in this  
world. Presume not vpon thy  
selfe, but place thy hope in God.  
Doe what lieth in thy power,  
and God will assist thee. Trust  
not thine owne knowledg, nor  
in the wisdom or prudence of  
any liuing creature, but rather  
in the grace of God, who hel-  
peth the humble, and humbleth  
the presumptuous and proud.  
2. Glorie not in wealth, if  
thou haue it; nor in the power  
of

of thy friends, but in God, who giueth all things, and above all desireth to giue thee himself. Extoll not thy selfe for the stature, and beautie of thy body, which is dissolued, and disfigured with euery little sicknes. Take not pleasure in thy naturall gifts or witt, least thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaine h all the good whatsoever nature hath giuen thee.

3. Esteeme not thy selfe better then others, least perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse then they. Be not proud of thy good workes, for the iudgments of God are farre different from the iudgments of men, & that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, be lieue that there is much more in others, that see thou maiest the better keep within thy hart the

precious treasure of humility. It is no preiudice vnto thee, to esteeme thy selfe worse then all the world: but it hurteth thee very much, to preferre thy selfe before any one. The humble enioy continuall peace: but in the hart of the proud, is enuy and often indignation.

*That too much familiarity is  
to be shunned.*

### CHAP. VIII.

**L**Ay not thy hart open to euery one: but treat of thy affaires with the wise, and such as feare God. Cōuerse not much with yong people, and strangers. Flater not the rich; neither do thou appeare willingly before great personages. Keepe company with the humble, simple, deuout, and vertuous, and confer with them of those things, that  
may

may edify. Be not familiar with any woman, but in general commend all good women to God. Desire to be familiar with God alone, and his Angells, and fly the knowledge of men.

2. We must haue charity towards all, but familiarity with all is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that the fame of some person that is vnknowne, is much esteemed; whose presence notwithstandinge is not grateful to the eies of the beholders. We thinke sometimes to please others by our company, and we rather distast them with our disordered manners, and the euill customes which they discover in vs.

*Of Obedience, and Subiection.*

CHAP. IX.

**I**T is a great matter to liue in Obedience, to be vnder a Superiour,

perious, and not to be at our owne disposition. It is much safer to liue in the state of subiection, then of gouernment. Many liue vnder Obedience, rather for necessity, then for charity: and such are discontented, and do easily repine & murmur. Neither can they attaine to freedome of mind, vnlesse they willingly and hartily put themselues vnder Obedience for the loue of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest, but in humble subiection vnder the gouernment of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places, haue deceiued many.

2. True it is, that euery one willinglye doth that which agreeth with his owne sense and liking; and is apt to affect those most, that are of his owne mind: But if God be amongst vs, we must leaue our owne iudgment, that so peace and quietnes may be



our  
sa-  
cc-  
ry  
or  
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F  
be the better preferred. Who is  
so wise, that he can fully know  
all things? Trust not therefore  
too much to thine owne con-  
cepts: but be willing to heare  
the iudgment of others. If that  
which thou thinkest be good,  
and notwithstanding dost leaue  
it for God, and followest the o-  
pinion of another, it shal be bet-  
ter for thee.

3. I haue often heard, that it  
is more secure to heare and take  
counsell, then to giue it. It may  
also fall out, that ech ones opi-  
nion may be good: but to refuse  
to yelde to others, when as rea-  
son, or cause requireth it, is a to-  
ken of wilfullnes and pride.

*Of the auoyding superfluity  
of wordes.*

CHAP. X.

**F**ly the vnquietnes of mē as  
much as thou canst, for the  
talke



talke of worldlye affaires hindereth very much, although they be recounted with sincere intention: for we are quickly defiled, and as it were enthralled with vanity. I could wish that I had often times held my peace, when I haue spoken: and that I had not byn in company. Why do we so willingly speake, and talke with one another, when notwithstanding we seldom returne to silence, without hurt of conscience? The cause wherfore we so willingly talke, is, for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receaue comfort one of another, & desire to ease our mind, ouer wearied with sundry thoughts: and we talke willingly, and thinke of those thinges which we loue best, and most desire; or of those, which we feelee most contrary vnto vs.

2. But alas, often times in vaine, and to no end: for this  
outward

in- outward comfort, is cause of no  
cy small losse of inward, and diuine  
n- consolation. Therefore we must  
e- warch and pray, least our time  
d passe without any fruit or profit.  
I If it be lawfull, and expedient  
, for thee to speake; speake those  
things that may edify. An euill  
custome, & neglect of our owne  
good, doth very much slacke the  
raynes to inconsiderate speach:  
Yet deuout discourses of hea-  
uently things, do greatly further  
our progresse in spirit, especial-  
lie where persons of one minde  
and spirit be gathered together  
in God.

*Of the obteyning of peace, and  
Zeale of spirituall profit.*

CHAP. XI.

WE might enioy peace, if we  
would not busie our selues  
with the words and deedes of  
other

homage a kempis

other mē, which appertaine nothing to our charge. How can he liue long in peace, that thrusteth himself into the cares of others, or that little or seldome recollecteth himselfe within his own brest? Blessed are the simple and pure minds, for they shall enioy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect, and contemplatiue? Because they laboured to mortify themselves wholly to earthly desires, and therefore they could with their whole hart, giue themselves to God, and freely attend to their owne affaires. We are too much ledde by our owne passions, and too solicitous for transitory thinges. We also seldome ouercom any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a feruent desire to profit in spirit: and therefore we remaine cold in deuotion, and full of tepidity.

3. If

3. If we were perfectly dead vnto our selue, and not intangled within our owne breasts, then we might also haue some tast of diuine thinges, and feele the sweetnesse of heauenly contemplation. The greatest, and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not free from our passions, & disordered inclinations: neither do we endeavour to enter into the path of perfection, which the Saintes haue walked before vs: and when any small aduersity befalleth vs, we are too quickly dejected, and turne our selues to human comforts.

4. If we endeavour like men of courage, to stand continually in the battaile, surely we should feele the fauourable assistance of God frō heauen. For he who giueth vs occasiō to fight, to the end we may get the victory. is ready to succour those that fight manfully.

30      *The following*  
fully, and do trust in his grace. If  
we esteeme our progresse in Re-  
ligious life, to consist only in  
these exterior obseruations, our  
deuotion will quickly be at an  
end. Let vs set the axe to the  
roote, that being freed from pas-  
sions, we may enioy true peace  
of mind.

5. If euery yeare we would  
roote out one vice, we should  
quickly become perfect mē. But  
now often times we perceauē it  
goeth contrary, & that we were  
better, and of a more pure con-  
science at the beginnunge of our  
conuerſion, then after many yea-  
res of our professiō. Our seruour  
and profit should increase daily;  
but now it is accompted a great  
matter, if one can attaine but  
some part of his first spirit. If we  
would vse but a little violence in  
the beginning, thē should we be  
able to performe all things after-  
wards with ease and ioy of hart.

6. Is



6. It is a hard matter to leaue that to which we are accustomed; but harder to do against our owne wils. But if thou dost not ouercome little and easy things; how wilt thou ouercome harder matters? Resist thy inclination in the first motions, and breake off euill customes, least perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didest cōsider how much inward peace vnto thy selfe, and ioy to others thou shouldest procure by demeaning thy selfe well, I suppose thou wouldest be more carefull of thy spirituall profit.

*Of the profit of Aduersity:*

CHAP. XII.

**I**T is good that we haue sometimes griefe and aduersities: for they often make a man enter into himselfe, & remember that  
he

he is heere in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thinge. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an euill or hard conceipt had of vs: and this, although we doe, & intend well. These thinges helpe often to the attaining of humility, and defend vs from vaine glory: for then we chiefly seeke God for our inward witnesse, when outwardly we be contrēd by men, and when there is no credit giuen vnto vs.

2. And therefore a man should settle himselfe so fully in God, that he needed not to seeke manie comfortes of men. When a good and vertuous man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with euill thoughtes, then he vnderstandeth better the great neede he hath of Gods assistance; without whose helpe he perceaueth he can do nothing that is good. Then

Then also he sorroweth, lamenteth, and prayeth for the miseries he suffereth. Then is he wearie of liuing longer, and wisheth that death would come, that he might be dissolued, and be with Christ. Then also he well perceaueth, that complete security, and perfect peace, cannot be had in this world.

*O resisting Temptation.*

CHAP. XIII.

**S**O longe as we liue in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation: for as it is written in Iob: Temptation is the life of mā vpon earth. Euery one therfore ought to be careful, & diligētly to arme himselfe with praier against his tentations, least the Diuell find time and place to deceaue him: who neuer sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may deuoure.

34      *The following*

No man is so perfect and holy,  
but hath sometimes temptatiōs:  
& we cannot be altogether free  
from them.

2. Temptations are often profitable vnto men, though they be troublesome, and grievous: for in them man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints haue passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations, and they that could not beare temptations, became reprobate and fell from God. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations or aduersities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temptations, whilest he liueth on earth, for in our selues is the cause thereof, being borne with inclination to euill. When one tentation or tribulation goeth away, another commeth: and we shal euer haue something to suffer, because we  
haue

one sparke of perfect charity,  
how easily would he discern,  
that all earthly things be full of  
vanity!

*Of bearing with the defects  
of others.*

CHAP. XVI.

**T**Hose things that a man cā-  
not amend in himselfe or  
in others, he ought to suffer pa-  
tiētly, vntill God ordaine other-  
wise. Think that perhaps it is  
better so, for thy tryall and pa-  
tiēce, without which our merits  
are not much to be esteemed.  
Thou oughtest to pray notwith-  
standing, when thou hast such  
impediments, that God would  
youchsafe to help thee, and that  
thou maist beare the patiently.

2. If one that once or twice  
warned doth not amend, con-  
tend not with him, but cōmit-  
tall

nomas a nemptis



44      *The following*

all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honoured in all his seruants, who knoweth how to turne euill into good. Endeauour to be patient in bearing with the defectes and infirmities of others: for that thy self also hast many things, which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy selfe such an one as thou wouldest, how canst thou expect to haue another in all thinges to thy liking? We would willingly haue others perfect, & yet we amend not our owne faults.

3. We will haue others severely corrected, and will not be corrected our selues. The large liberty of others displeaseth vs: and yet we will not haue our desires denied vs. We will haue others kept vnder by rigorous lawes, but in no sort will we our selues be restrained. And thus it appeareth, howe seldome we weigh

## Of Workes done of Charity.

## CHAP XV.

**F**Or no worldly thinge, nor for the loue of any man, is any euill to be done: but yet for the profit of one that standeth in neede, a good worke is sometimes to be left off, or chaunged also for a better. For by dooing this, a good worke is not losse, but changed into another of greater merit. The exterior work without charity, profiteth nothing; but whatsoeuer is done of charity, be it neuer so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, it is fruitfull, and of great esteeme in the sight of God. For God weigheth more with how much loue one worketh, then how much he dooth. He dooth much, that loveth much.

2. He

42      *The following*

2. He doth much that doth a thing well: he doth well that rather serueth the common good of others, then his owne will. Oftentimes it seemeth to be charity, and it is rather carnality: because naturall inclination, selfe will, hope of reward, and desire of our owne commodity, will seldome be wanting.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himselfe in nothing; but only desireth in all thinges that the glory of God should be exalted. He also enuieth none, because he loueth no priuate good: neither wil he reioyce in himselfe, but wisheth aboue al things to enioy God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it vnto God, frō whō, as from the fountaine, all things proceed: in whom finally all Saints haue perfect rest, by fruition of his glory. O he that had  
one

haue lost that innocencye with which were created. Many seeke to fly temptations, and do fall more grieuously into them. By flight alone we canot ouercome; but by patience and true humilitie, we become stronger then all our enimies.

4 He that only auoideth them outwardly, and doth not plucke them vp by the roote, shall profit little: yea temptation will the sooner returne vnto him; and he shall feele himselfe in worse case then before. By little and little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods helpe) thou shalt more easily ouercome, then with violence, and thine owne importunity. Often take counsell in temptations, and deale not roughly with him that is tempted; but giue him comfort, as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy selfe.

5. The beginning of all euill

temptations, is inconstancy of mind, & litle confidence in God: for as a ship without a sterne is tossed to and fro with the waues; so the man that is negligent, and leaueth his purpose, is many waies tempted. Fire trieth iron, and temptation a iust man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to doe, but temptations doe shew vs what we are. We must be watchfull, especially in the beginnunge of the temptation, for the enemy is then more easily ouercome, if he be not suffered to enter the doore of our harts, but be resisted without the gate, at his first knocke. Wherefore one said: Withstand the beginnings, for an after remedy comes often too late. First there commeth to the mind an euill thought, then a strong imagination therof, afterwards delight, and an euill motion, and then consent: and so by little and little



weigh our neighbour in the same ballance with our selues. If all men were perfect, what should we haue to suffer of our neighbour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordained, that we may learne to beare one anothers burdē. for no man is without defect, no man without burden, no man sufficient of himselfe, no man endued, with so much wisdom as he needeth: but we ought to beare with one another, comfort one another, helpe, instruct, and admonish one another. Adversity best discovereth how great vertue each one hath: for occasions make not a man fraile, but do shew what he is.

## CHAP. XVII.

**T**Hou must learne to breake thy owne will in manye things, if thou wilt haue peace, and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwel in community, or in a congregation, and to conuerse therein without complaint, and to perseuer there faithfully vntill death. Blessed is he that hath there liued wel, and ended happily. If thou wilt perseuer in grace as thou oughtest, and profit in verrue, esteeme thy selfe as a banished man, and a pilgrim vpō earth. Thou must be contented for the loue of Christ, to be esteémed as a foole in this world, if thou desire to lead a vertuous, and perfect religious life.

2. The wearing of a religious  
habit,

masters, who in so small things  
do see themselves so weake.

*Of auoyding rash Iudgement.*

CHAPT. XIV.

**T**urne thine eies vnto thy  
selfe, and beware thou  
iudge not rashly the deeds of  
other men. In iudging of others  
a man alwaies laboureth in  
vaine, often erreth, and quickly  
sinneth; but in iudging and dis-  
cussing of himselfe, he alwaies  
laboureth fruitfully. We often  
iudg of things according to our  
owne desire; for priuate affectiō  
bereaues vs easily of true iudge-  
ment. If God were alwaies the  
pure intention of our desire, we  
should not be so much troubled  
with the repugnance of our sen-  
suality.

2. But oftentimes some in-  
ward secret inclination, or out-  
ward affection occureth, which  
draw-

40      *The following*

draweth vs after it. Many secret-  
lie seeke themselves in their ac-  
tions, and knowe it not. They  
seeme also to liue in good peace  
of mind, when things are done  
according to their will, and opi-  
nion; but if it succeed otherwise  
thē they desire, they are straight-  
waies troubled, and much afflic-  
ted. The diuersities of iudginets  
and opinions, cause oftentimes  
dissentions betweene religious  
and deuout persons.

3. An ould custome is hardly  
broken, and no man is willingly  
lead further then himself liketh.  
If thou dost more rely vpon thine  
owne reason or industry, then  
vpon the vertue of obedience to  
Iesus Christ, it wil be long before  
thou be illuminated with grace,  
for almighty God will haue vs  
perfectly subiect vnto him, and  
that we transcend the narrow  
limits of humane reason, enfla-  
med with his loue.

of

le our wicked ennemy getteth full entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginninge. And how much the longer one is negligent in resistinge: so much weaker doth he become daily, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conuersion: others in the later ende; others againe are much troubled almoste throughe the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted according to the wisdome, and equity of the diuine appointment, which weigheth the state and deserts of men: and ordaineth all things for the sauing, of his elect and chosen seruants.

7. We ought not therefore to despaire when we are tempted; but so much the more seruently to pray vnto God, that he will vouchsafe to help vs in al tribula-



tion; who surely according to the saying of S. Paul, will make with temptation such issue, that we may be able to sustaine it. Let vs therefore humble our selues vnder the hande of God in all temptations and tribulations; for he will saue, and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions man is proued, how much he hath profited; and his merit is therby the greater before God, and his vertues do more openly appeare. Neither is it any great matter if a man be deuout and feruent, when he seleeth no heauines: but if in time of aduersity he beare himselfe patiently, there is hope of great good. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often ouercome in small ones, which do daily occure; to the end that being humbled, they may neuer presume on themselves in great  
mat-

habit, and shauing of the crown,  
do little profit; but chang of mā-  
ners, and perfect mortification  
of passiōs, make a true religious  
man. He that seeketh any thing  
else but God, and the health of  
his soule, shall find nothing but  
tribulation and sorrow. Nei her  
can he remaine long in peace,  
that laboureth not to be in the  
meanest place, and subiect to all.

3. Thou camst to serue, not to  
be serued. Know that thou wast  
called to suffer and to labour, not  
to be idle, or to spend thy time  
in talke. Heere in the schoole of  
Christ, men are proued as gold in  
the fornace. Heere no man can  
stand, vnlesse he humble himself  
with his whole hart, for the loue  
of God.

*Of the examples of the holy  
Fathers.*

CHAP. XVIII.

**C**onsider the lively exam-  
ples of the holy Fathers,  
in whom true perfection and re-  
ligion shined; and thou shalt see  
how little it is, and almost no-  
thing which we do now in these  
daies. Alas, what is our life if it  
be compared to the? The Saints  
and friends of Christ serued our  
Lord in hunger and thirst, in  
cold and nakednesse, in labour  
and wearines, in watching and  
fasting, in prayer and holy me-  
ditations, in persecutions and  
many reproaches.

2. O, how many and grie-  
uous tribulations suffered the A-  
postles, Martyrs, Confessours,  
Virgins, and all the rest that en-  
deauoured to follow the steps of  
Christ!

Christ! They hated their liues in  
 this world, that they might pos-  
 sess their soules in euerlasting  
 life. O, How strait and poore a  
 life, led the holy Fathers in the  
 wildernes! How long and grie-  
 uous tentations suffered they!  
 How often and how grieuously  
 were they assaulted by their  
 Ghostly enemy! How feruent  
 praier, offered they daily to  
 God! How rigorous abstinence  
 did they vse! How feruent zeale,  
 and care had they of their spiri-  
 tuall profit! How strong, and cō-  
 tinuall a cōbat had they for the  
 ouercōming of vices! How pure  
 and vpright intention kept they  
 vnto God? In the day they la-  
 boured, and in the night they  
 attended to continuall prayer,  
 although when they laboured  
 also, they ceased not frō mentall  
 prayer.

3. They spent all their tyme  
 With profit, euery houre seemed

short for the seruice of God; and for the great sweetnes they had in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporall refection: They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kinsfolkes; they desired to haue nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took thinges necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved to serue their bodies euen in necessity. They were poore in earthly thinges, but rich in grace & vertues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were replenished with grace, and spirituall comfort.

4. They were strangers in the world, but neere and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and abiect to this world: but they were precious, & beloued in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, liued in simple



obedience, walked in charity & patience: and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were giuen for an example and patterne of perfection in Gods Church, & their example should more styr vs vp to a desire of our spirituall profit, then the number of the lukewarme and dissolute liuers, drawe vs to the neglect therof.

O, how great was the feruour of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy Institution? How great was their deuotion to prayer? How diligent emulation of vertue? How exact discipline florished? How great reuerence and obedience, vnder the rule of their Superiour, obserued they in all thinges? Their footstps yet remaining doe testify, that they were indeed holy and perfect men: who fighting so valiantly, trode the world vnder

der their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that breaketh not the rule, and that can with patience endure that which he hath professed.

6 O coldnes and negligence of our time, that we so quickly decline from our first feruour, and are come to that passe, that very slouth and coldnes of spirit, makes our own liues tedious vnto vs. Would to God the desire to profic in vertue, did not wholly sleepe in thee, who hast often seene the holy examples of deuout and religious soules.

*Of the Exercise of a good, and Religious person,*

### CHAPT. XIX.

**T**He life of a Religious person, ought to shine with all vertues: that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth

to men. And with reason thou  
oughtest to be much more with-  
in, then is perceaued without:  
for God behouldeth the hart,  
whom we ought most highly to  
reuerence whersoever we are, &  
walke in purity like Angels in  
his sight, and to renew daily our  
purposes, and styr vp our selues  
to seruour, as though this were  
the first day of our conuersion;  
and to say: Helpe me, my God,  
in this my good purpose, and in  
thy holy seruice; and graunt that  
I may now this day begin perfe-  
ctly, for that which I haue done  
hitherto, is nothing.

2. According to our purpose,  
shalbe the successe of our profit:  
and much diligence is necessary  
to him, that will profit much.  
And if he that firmly purposeth,  
often faileth, what shall he doe,  
that seldome purposeth anye  
thing, or with little certainty? It  
may fall out sundry waies, that

we leaue off our purpose: and if for light occasions we omit our accustomed exercises, it seldome passeth without some losse. The purpose of iust men, is rather grounded vpon the grace of God, then on their owne wisdom, in whom also they alwaies haue confidence, in whatsoever they take in hand. For man doth purpose, but God disposeth: neither is the way of mā in his owne hands.

3. if an accustomed exercise be sometimes omitted for some worke of charity, or of intention to profit our neighbour, it may easily afterward be recovered: but if it be lightly left, through inconstancy or negligence, it is an offence, and will proue hurtfull. Though we endeavour what we can, yet shall we faile in many things. But yet we must alwaies purpose something certaine, especially against  
that

of Christ. Lib. I. 35

that which most hinders vs. We must examine well, and order both our exterior and interior actions; for that both are expedient for our progresse in vertue.

4. If thou canst not alwaies recollect thy selfe, yet do it sometimes, and that at least once euery day; to wit in the morning, or euening. In the morning make thy good purpose; in the euening examine thy selfe what thou hast byn that day in word, deede, or thought: for that in these oftentimes perhaps thou hast offended God, & thy neighbour. Arme thy selfe with courage against the malicious attempts of thine enemy. Refraine Gluttony, and thou shalt more easily bridle all the disordered inclinations of the flesh. Neuer be altogether idle, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or labour-



56      *The following*

ring something of profit for the common good: but bodily exercises are to be discreetly vsed, & not to be vndertaken equally of all.

5. Those things that be not common, are not to be done in the sight of al, for priuate things are best done in secret. But thou must beware, thou neglect not that to which thou art bound by common rule, and be ready in performing thy priuate deuotions: but hauing fully and faithfully accomplished all thy duties, and those things that were enioyned thee, if thou hast further leasure, returne to thy selfe as thy deuotion desireth. All cannot vse the same exercise, but one is more conuenient for this person, another for that. According to the diuersity of times also, diuers exercises are fitting; for some suite better with festiual dayes, others with daies of labour.

labour. We haue need of one kinde in temptations, and of others in time of peace, and quiet. We desire to thinke of other things, when we are sorrowfull, then we do when we are cheerfull in our Lord.

6. When principall feasts draw neere, good exercises are to be renewed, and the intercessions of Saints more feruently to be implored. From feast to feast, we should make some good purpose, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the euerlasting feasts of heauē. And therefore we ought to prepare our selues carefully at holy times, & to liue more deuoutly, & to keep more exactly all things that we are to obserue, as though shortly we were to receaue reward of our labour at Gods hands.

7. And if it be differred, let vs think that we were not well pre-

prepared, nor worthy as yet of  
 so great glory, as shall be reuea-  
 led in vs at the time appointed:  
 and let vs labour to prepare our  
 selues better for our departure.  
 Blessed is that seruant ( sayth S.  
 Luke the Euangelist ) whom  
 when his Lord commeth, he  
 shall finde watching: verily I say  
 vnto you, he shall place him  
 ouer all that he possesseth.

*Of the loue of Solitude,  
 and Silence.*

CHAP. XX.

**S**eeke a fit time to attend to  
 thy selfe, and often thinke  
 of the benefits of God. Leane  
 curious things. Read ouer such  
 matters, as may cause rather  
 compunction, then the labour  
 of much study. If thou with-  
 draw thy selfe from superfluous  
 talke, and idle wandring about,  
 as also from hearing of newes  
 and

of Christ. Lib. I. 59

and tales, thou shalt find sufficient, and fit time to thinke of good things. The greatest Saints auoided the company of men as much as they could, & chose to liue to God in secret.

2. One said: As often as I haue bene amongst men, I haue returned lesse man. The same we finde by experience when we talke long. It is easier to keep silence altogether, then not to excede in words. It is easier for a man to keepe home, then to demeane himselfe as he ought in all things abroad. He therefore that desireth to attaine to inter-nall, and spirituall graces, ought with Iesus, to withdraw himselfe from the people. No man goeth safely abroad, but he that gladly keepeth home. No man securely governeth, but he that delighteth to liue in subiection. No man securely commandeth, but he that hath learned readily  
to

oo      *The following*  
to obey.

3. No man securely reioy-  
ceth, vnlesse he hath within him  
the testimony of a good conf-  
cience. And yet the security of  
Saints, was alwaies full of the  
feare of God. Neither were they  
lesse carefull and humble in the-  
selues, for that they shined out-  
wardly with grace, & great ver-  
tues. But the security of euill mē  
riseth of pride and deceaueth  
them. Neuer promise to thy self  
security in this life, although  
thou seeme to be a good Reli-  
gious man, or deuout Hermite.

4. Oftentimes those, who in  
the iugdment of men were of  
better esteeme, haue bin in gre-  
atest danger, by reason of their  
too much confidence. Where-  
fore it is more profitable to ma-  
nie, not to be altogether free frō  
temptations, but to be often as-  
saulted; least they should be too  
secure, and so perhaps be listd.



of Christ. Lib.I. 61

in pride: least also they should  
too freely giue themselves to  
outward comforts. O, how good  
a conscience should he keep, that  
would neuer seeke transitory  
joy: would neuer busy himselfe  
with the thinges of this world:  
& how great peace and quietnes  
should he possesse, that would  
cut off all vaine solicitude, and  
only thinke of diuine thinges,  
and such as are profitable for his  
soule, and place all his hope in  
God!

5. No man is worthy of hea-  
uently comfort, vnlesse he haue  
diligently exercised himselfe in  
holy compunction. If thou desi-  
rest true contrition of hart, re-  
tire thy selfe into some secret  
and solitary place, and exclude  
from thy mind the tumults, and  
vquietnes of the world, as it is  
written: In your chambers be ye  
sory. In thy Cell thou shalt find  
that, which abroad thou shalt  
often

often loose. The Cell, if thou continue in it, waxeth sweet, & if thou loque not to stay in it, it becometh irksome. If in the beginning of thy conuersion, thou accustome thy self to remaine in it, & keep it well, it wil be afterwards vnto thee a deere friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and quietnes, a deuour soule perfecteth her selfe, and learneth the secrets of holy Scriptures. There she findeth flouds of tears, with which she may euery night wash and cleanse her selfe, and be made so much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much the further off she liueth from all worldly disquiet. Who so therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God with his holy Angels, will draw neere vnto him. It were better for a man to lye hidden, & haue care of himself, thē being  
care,

carelesse of his soule, to worke miracles in the world. It is commendable for a Religious persō to goe abroad seldome, to fly to be seene, and to be vnwilling to see men.

7. Why wilt thou see that, which is not lawfull for thee to haue. The world passeth away, and all its delights. The desires of our sensuality, drawe vs to walke abroad, but when the houre is past, what bringest thou home, but a burdened cōscience, and distracted thoughts? A ioyfull going abroad, bringeth often a sorrowfull coming home, & a merry euening makes a sad morning. So all carnall ioy entreth gently, but in the end it causeth remorse & destruction. What is elsewhere to be seene, which thou canst not see heere? Heere thou seest heauen, and earth, & all the elements, of which al other things are made.

8. What

## 64 The following

8. What is there any where to be seene that can long continue vnder the sunne? Thou thinkest perhaps to satiate thy selfe, and haue thy fil; but thou shalt neuer attaine it. If it were possible for thee to see al things created, present before thine eyes, what were it all but a vaine & vnprofitable sight? Lift vp thine eyes to God in heauen, & aske pardō. of thy sinns & negligēces. Leauē vaine things to the vaine. Attend thou to that which God cōmandeth. Shut thy dore vpon thee, & call vpon Iesus thy beloued. Be thou with him in thy Cell, for thou shalt not find so great peace in any other place. If thou hadst staid within, & not giuen care to idle newes, thou haddest kept thy selfe better in good peace. But now that thou delightest sometimes to heare nouelties, it is fit thou sufferest for it some trouble & disquiet of mind.

Of

Of Compunction of hart.

CHAP. XXI.

**I**F thou wilt profit any thing, keepe thy selfe alwaies in the feare of God, and yelde not too much scope to liberty. Containe all thy senses vnder the rule of discipline, and giue not thy selfe to foolish mirth. Giue thy selfe to compunction of hart, & thou shalt finde deuotion. Compunction discouereth much good, which with too much liberty is quickly lost. It is meruaile that a man can euer perfectly reioyce in this life, if he consider his banishment, and weigh the many perils, wherwith his soule is inuironed. The leuity of our mind, and the little care we haue of our faults, makes vs not to feele the sorrowes of our soule.

2. But oftentimes we vainely laugh, when we haue iust cause



to weepe. There is neither true liberty, nor good mirth, but that which is in the feare of God, accompanied with a good conscience. Happy is he, that can auoyd all cause of distraction, and draw him selfe to the vnion of holy compunction. Happy is he, that can abandon all that may defile, or burden his conscience. Fight manfully, one custome ouercomes another. If thou canst forbear to intermeddle with that which belongs to others; they will not hinder thee in that which thou hast to doe.

3. Busy not thy selfe in matters which appertaine to others: neither doe thou meddle at all with the affaires of thy betters. Looke first of all to thy selfe, and haue a more especial care to admonish thy selfe, then whom-soeuer thou louest best. If thou hast not the fauour of men, be not therfore grieved; but let this  
seeme

seeme vnto thee a most iust cause of grieve, that thou lookest not to thy selfe with that care, which becometh the seruant of God, and a deuout religious person. It is oftentimes better and more secure, that a man hath not many consolations in this life, especially such, as are agreeable to the inclination of our corrupt nature. But that we haue none at all, or do seldome tast diuine comforts, the fault is ours, that do not seeke for compunction of hart, nor do wholly forsake the vaine comforts of this world.

4. Acknowledge thy selfe unworthy of diuine comforts, and that thou hast deserued great tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grieuous & loathsome vnto him. A good man findeth alwaies sufficient cause of teares and sorrow; for whether he consider himselfe, or weighe the

68 *The following*

estat of his neighbour, he knoweth that none liueth here without tribulation. And how much the more throughly he considereth himselfe: so much the more is his sorrow. Our sinnes and vices in which we are so plunged, that we can seldom contemplate the things of heauen, do minister vnto vs matter of most iust sorrow and harty contrition.

5. If thou didst thinke more diligently of thy death, then of liuing long, thou wouldest without doubt be more careful in the amendment of thy life. And if thou wouldest consider within thy selfe, the paines of hell, or of purgatorie, I am perswaded it would moue thee to endure any labour or paine whatsoever in this world, and not to feare any kinde of austeritie. But because these things euer not to the hart, and we still loue that which delighteth vs, therefore we remaine  
cold

cold & void of spiritual vigour.

6. Oftentimes our want of spirit is the cause, that our wretched bodies do so quickly complaine. Pray therefore with all humility to our Lord, that he will vouchsafe to giue thee the spirit of contrition, and say with the Prophet. Feed me, o Lord, with the bread of teares, and giue me to drink with teares in measure.

*Of the consideration of humane Misery.*

CHAP. XXII.

**M**iserable thou art wherso-  
euer thou be, & whither-  
soeuer thou turnest, if thou turnest not thy selfe to God. Why art thou troubled when things succeed not as thou wouldest, & desirest? Who is there that hath all things as he will? Neither I, nor thou, nor any mā vpō earth. There is not anie man in this

world without some tribulation  
or afflictio, though he be a King,  
or a Pope. Who thinkest thou  
then is in best case? Truly he that  
willingly suffereth somethinge  
for God.

3. Many weak and feeble men  
say: Behould how well such a  
one liues, how rich, how power-  
full, how beautifull, how great  
a man he is, but lift vp thine eyes  
to the riches of heauen, & thou  
shalt see, that all temporal prof-  
perity is as nothing, full of vn-  
certainty, and which rather op-  
presseth then otherwise: for it is  
neuer had without solicitude &  
feare. The felicity of man, con-  
sisteth not in hauing abundan-  
ce of temporall riches: a meane  
sufficeth. It is trulie miserye e-  
nough to liue vpon earth. How  
much more a man desireth to be  
spirituall, so much the more di-  
stastfull is this present life vnto  
him: for he better perceaueth, &  
seeth



seeth more cleerly the defects of human corruption. To eate, to drinke, to watch, to sleepe, to labour, to repose, and to be subiect to all other necessities of nature, is doubtlesse a great misery to a deuout mind, that would gladly be free & deliuered frō all sinne.

4. The inward man is much oppressed with these corporall necessities, whilst he is in this world. And therefore the holy Prophet, prayeth with great deuotion to be deliuered frō them, saying: Deliuer me, O Lord, from my necessities. But woe be to them that know not their misery, and much more to thē that loue this miserable, and corruptible life. For some there be so dotingly affected vnto it, that although with labour and begginge, they scarce get bread to eate, yet if they might liue heere alwaies, they would care but little for the Kingdome of heauen.

4. O senselesse creatures and infidels in hart, who lie buried so deepe in earth, that they haue no tast nor feeling, but of sensuall things! But miserable wretches, they shall in the end feele, to their cost, how vile, and of no esteeme was that which they loued. The Saints of God and the deuout seruants and friends of Christ, respected little what pleased their natural inclinatioſ, or what flourished in this life: but with their whole hopes and intentions, they sought after the riches of heauen. Their whole desire was carried vp to those euertlasting treasures, which are inuisible; least they might haue byne drawne to base affections, by the loue of visible thinges. Loose not thy hope to profit in spirituall matters: there is yet time: the houre is not yet past.

5. Why wilt thou deferre thy good purpose? Rise vp in this ve-

the instant, and begin, and say:  
 Now is the time to worke, the  
 time to fight: now is it a fit time  
 to amend my selfe. When any  
 tribulation, or affliction doth be-  
 fall thee, then is the time to me-  
 rit. Thou must passe through fire  
 and water, before thou come to  
 rest. Vnlesse thou vse violence to  
 thy selfe, thou shalt not ouer-  
 come thy euill inclinations. As  
 longe as we carry about with vs  
 this frayle body of ours, we can  
 neuer be without sinne, nor liue  
 without tediousnes and grieve.  
 We would gladly enioy quiet-  
 nes, and be deliuered from all  
 misery; but for that we haue by  
 sinne lost our innocency, we ha-  
 ue together with it lost also our  
 happines. And therefore it beho-  
 ueth vs to haue patiēce, & to ex-  
 pect the mercy of God, till this  
 iniquity haue an end, & that which  
 is mortal be swallowed vp of life.  
 6. O, how great is the frailty of  
 man

74      *The following*

man alwaies inclined to euill. To day thou confessest thy sinnes, and to morrow thou comittest againe the same which thou didst confesse. Now thou purposest to take heed, & within an houre thou dost, as if thou hadst made no purpose at all. We may therefore with great reason humble our selues, and neuer admit any thought of our owne esteeme, being so weak as we are, and subiect to euery chaunge. Full soone ( God knowes ) is that lost by negligence, which with much labour was hardly gotten by grace.

7. What wil become of vs in the end, who do so timely begin to wax colde? Wo be vnto vs, if we will now giue our selues to ease, as if all were already in peace and security; when as yet there scarce appeareth so much as any signe of true sanctity in our cōuersation. It were  
need-

needfull that we were taught good manners againe like Children, if so perhaps there might be some more hope of our amendment, and profit in spirit.

*Of the consideration of death.*

CHAP. XXIII.

**T**He houre of death will quickly ouertake thee, & therefore look how thou liuest. To day a man is liuing, and to morrow he doth not appeare, and being once out of sight, he is also quickly out of minde. O dulnesse and hardnesse of mans hart, who thinketh only on that he seeth, and foreseeth not that which is to come! Thou shouldest alwaies so order thy thoughts and actions, as if this very day, thou wert to depart this life. If thou hadst a good conscience, thou wouldest not much feare



feare death. It, is better to auoid sinne, then to fly death. If thou be not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is vncertaine, and whether thou shalt see it or no, thou knowest not.

2, What doth it auaille vs to liue long, when we do so little amend? A long life doth not alwaies make vs better, nay rather it oftentimes heapeth vpon vs a greater loade of sinnes. O that we had spent one day well in this worlde! Many do reckon the yeares of their conuersion, but ful slender oftentimes is the fruite of amendment. If it be a dreadfull thing to dye, perhaps it will be more dangerous for thee to liue longe. Blessed is he, that hath alwaies before his eyes the houre of his death, and disposeth himselfe daily therunto, If thou hast at any time seene a man die, thinke with thy selfe,  
that

that thou must one day passe the same way.

3. When it is morning, think that perhaps thou shalt not liue vntill night, and when eueninge comes, do not dare to promise vnto thy selfe the next morning. Be alwaies ready & so order thy life, that death may neuer take thee vnprepared. Many die suddenly, for the sonne of man wil come, when we least thinke of it. When that laste houre shall come, thou wilt begin to thinke farre otherwise of thy life, and much later, that thou hast bene so slacke and negligent.

4. O, how wise and happy is he, that now laboureth to be such in his life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death? For the perfect contempt of the world, the feruent desire to profit in vertue, the loue of discipline, the labour of pennance, the readinesse of obedience, the forsaking

saking of our selues, and the bearing patiently of all aduersity for the loue of Christ, will giue great confidence of a happy end. Thou maist do much good whilest thou art well; but when thou art sick, what thou wilt be able to do, I know not. Few do grow better, and amend themselves with sicknes; as also they that wander much abroad, seldom become holy.

5. Trust, not vpon thy friēds or neighbours; neither do thou put off to future times, the care of thy soules health: for thou shalt sooner be forgotten, then thou doost imagine. It is better now to prouide in time, and do some good before thou goest, then to trust in the help of others, when thou art gone. If thou hast noe care of thy selfe now when thou hast time, who wil be carefull for thee hereafter? The time which now thou hast  
is

is very precious. Now are the daies of health. Now is the time acceptable. But alas, that thou spendest it so little to thy profit, in which thou mightest gaine eternal life? The time wil come, when thou wilt desire one day, or one houre to amend, and I cannot assure thee, that thou shalt obtaine it.

6. O my dearest brother, from how great danger maist thou deliuer thy selfe? Fro how great feare maist thou be freed, if thou dost now liue fearfull, and carefull of thy death? Labour to liue in such sort, that at the houre of death, thou maist rather reioyce thē feare. Learne now to dye to the world, that thou maist then begin to liue with Christ. Learne now to contemne all earthly thinges, that thou maist then frelie goe to Christ. Chastice now thy body with pennance, that thou maist  
then

80      *The following*  
then haue assured confidence.

7. Ah foole, why dost thou think thou shalt liue long, being not certaine of so much as one day? How many haue byne deceaued, and taken out of this world on a suddaine, when they least expected it! How often hast thou heard, how such a one was suddainely slaine, another was drowned, another falling from some high place brake his neck, another dyed at his meate, another when he was playing: one came to his end by fire, another by sword, another by plague, another died by the hands of theeues: so as death is the end of all, and the life of man passeth away like a shaddow.

8. Who will remember thee, and who will pray for thee after thy death? Do now, beloued brother, do now what thou canst, for thou knowest not how soon thou shalt die, nor what shall befall



fall thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time, heape together eternall riches. Thinke on nothinge, but on the health of thy soule. Haue care only on that which belongeth to God. Make the Saintes of God thy friends by honouring them, and imitating their vertues, that whe thou departest this life, they may receaue thee into their euerlasting dwellings.

9. Esteeme thy selfe as a pilgrime, and stranger vpon earth, and as one to whom the affaires of this world do nothing appertaine. Keepe thy hart free, and lifted vp to God, for thou hast not heere any permanent Citty. Send thither thy prayers dayly with sighes, and teares, that thy soule may deserue to passe with much happines to our Lord after death.

## Of Iudgment and the punishment of sinne.

## CHAPT. XXIV.

**I**N all things consider the end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before that seuerer Iudge, from whom nothing can be hidden, and is not appeased with guists, nor admitteth excuses, but iudgeth according to iustice. O most wretched & foolish sinner, that fearest sometimes the countenance of an angry man; what answer wilt thou make to God, to whom al thy wickednes is knowne? Why prouidest thou not for thy self against that rigorous day of iudgement. in which no man can be excused, or defended by another, but euerie one wil be burden inough to him selfe? Now thy paines are profitable, thy teares acceptable, thy cries are heard, thy sorrow

satis

their liues: the horror of the difficulty, and the labour of the combat. But they aboue others profite most in vertue, that endeauiour most to ouercome those things, which are grieuous and contrary vnto them. For there a mā profiteth more, and deserueth greater grace, wher he more ouercometh and mortifieth himselfe in spirit.

4. But all men haue not alike to ouercome and mortify: yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he haue more passions, shall profit more in vertue, then another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be lesse seruient in the pursuite of vertue. Two things chiefly helpe to our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our selues violently from that to which nature is viciously inclined: and to labour earnestly for that vertue, which we most wāt. Be carefull also to auoide with great diligence, those things in  
thy

thy selfe, which do most displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soule out of euery occasion, and whersoever thou be: so as if thou seest or hearest any good, stirre vp thy selfe to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproofe, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labour quickly to amēd it. As thine eie obserueth others, so art thou also noted againe by others. O, how sweet and comfortable a thing it is, to see the seruants of Christ feruent and deuout, endued with vertuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, how pittifull and grieuous a thing it is, to see the that liue in a dissolute and disordered sort, not applying themselves to that, for which they were called! O, how great damage and great danger is it, to neglect

God, and become a spirituall  
man? Go on therefore with cou-  
rage, thou shalt shortly receaue  
the reward of thy labours, and  
there shall be no more feare nor  
sorrow, in the confines of thy  
habitation. Thou must labour  
a while, thou shalt after-  
wards haue great rest; yea euer-  
lasting ioy. If thou continuest  
faithfull and diligent in seruing  
of God, do not doubt but God  
will be faithfull and liberal in  
giuing thee reward. Thou ough-  
test to haue a good hope of get-  
ting the victory, but thou must  
not make thy selfe assured ther-  
of, least thou wax negligent,  
or be puffed vp with pride.

2. Whē one that was in great  
anxiety of mind, oftē wauering  
betweene feare and hope, did  
once, being oppressed with grie-  
fe, prostrate himself in a Church  
in prayer before an Altar, & said  
within himselfe: O, if I knew  
that



that I shoulde yet perseuer! he presently heard as it were a voice from God, which said: What if thou diddest know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldest do then, and thou shalt be secure. And being herewith comforted, and strenghtened in mind, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what shoulde befall him, but rather laboured to vnderstand what was the perfect, and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of euerie good worke.

3. Hope in our Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth manie back frō that spirituall good, and the diligent amendment of  
their

satisfieth for thy sinnes, and purgeth thy soule.

2. The patient man hath a great and healthfull purgatory, who receauing iniuries, grieueth more for others malice, then for his owne wronges; prayeth willingly for his aduersaries, and from his hart forgiueth their offences; delayeth not to aske forgiveness of whomsoever he hath offended; is sooner moued to compassion then to anger; vseth often violence to himselfe; and laboureth with his whole force to subdue the flesh in all things to the spirit. It is better to purge our sinnes, and vices now, then to reserue them for purgatory. Verily the inordinat loue we beare to our selues, deceaueth vs.

3. What other thing shal that fire feede one, but thy sinnes? How much the more thou sparest thy selfe now, and followest the desires of thy corrupt nature:

so much the more grieuouflye  
shalt thou be punished heereaf-  
ter, and so much the more mat-  
ter dost thou keepe for that pur-  
ging fire. In the selfe same wher-  
in a man hath sinned, shall he be  
more grieuoufly punished. There  
shal the slouthful be pricked for-  
wardes, with burninge goads.  
There shall the Gluttons be tor-  
mented with insatiable hunger  
and thirst. There shall the lasciu-  
ious & the louers of pleasures,  
be couered ouer with burninge  
pitch & brimstone. The enuious  
like raging dogges, shall there  
howle for griefe.

4. There is no vice that shal not  
haue his proper torment. The  
proud, shall be full of all shame  
and confusion. The couerous,  
shall be in miserable want. One  
houre of paine there shall be  
more sharp, then a hundred yea-  
res of most hard pennance heer.  
There is no rest there, nor com-  
tor

neglect the purposes of their vocation, & to busy themselves, in that which appertaineth not vnto them, nor is committed to their care.

6 Be mindfull of the purpose thou hast made, & haue alwaies before the eyes of thy soule, the picture of thy Saniour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed, looking vpon the life of Christ, seeing thou hast so slacklie endeauoured to conforme thy selfe vnto him though thou hast walked a long time in the way of the seruice of God. A religious person that exerciseth himselfe seriously, and deuoutly in the most holy life, & passion of our Lord, shal there abundantly find whatsoeuer is necessary, & profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any thing elswher, but only in Iesus. O, if Iesus crucified wold come into our harts, how quickly & fully should we  
be in-

94      *The following*

into instructed in all truth.

7. A feruent religious person taketh, and beareth all well that is commanded him: but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation vpon tribulation, and on all sides is afflicted: for he is void of inward consolation, and is forbidden to seeke externall comforts. A religious person that liueth not according to discipline, is in great danger of the ruine of his soule. He that seeketh libertie and ease, shall euer liue in disquiet: for one thinge or other will allwaies displease him.

8. How do so many other religious persons, who liue vnder the strict rule of Monastical discipline? They seldom go abroad, they liue retiredly, they feede meanly, they are cloathed coarsely, they labour much, speake little, watch longe, rise earlye, spend much time in prayer, read often,



esteeme, then faire words. Then a strict life and harde pennance, will be more pleasinge, then all earthly delights. Accustome thy selfe now to suffer a little, that thou maiest then be deliuered from more grieuous paines. Prooue heer first what thou canst endure heerafter. If now thou canst beare so little, how wilt thou be able to endute euerlastinge torments? If now a little sufferinge make thee so impatient, what will hell fire do heerafter? Assure thy self, thou canst not haue two Paradises. It is impossible for thee, to enioy delights heere in this world, and raigne heerafter with Christ in heauen.

7. If thou hadst hitherto liued alwaies in honors and delights, what woulde it auaille thee, if thou shouldest presently dy? All is vanity, but to loue God, and only to serue him. And he that loueth God with his whole hart,

needeth to feare neither death, punishment, iudgment, nor hell, for perfect loue, giues secure access to God. But he that delighteth alwaies in sinne, what wonder though he alwaies feare death, and be terrified with the thought of Iudgment? Yet it is good, that if loue be not of force to withhould thee from sin, that at least the feare of hell may restayne thee. And he that layeth aside the feare of God, can neuer continue long in good state, but falleth quickly into the snares of the diuell.

*Of the seruient amendment of  
our Whole life.*

CHAPT. XXV.

**B**E watchfull and diligent in the seruice of God, and often think with thy selfe wherefore thou camest, and why thou didst leaue the world. Was it not that thou mightest liue to  
God,

fort for the damned Heere yet  
sometimes our labours cease, and  
we enioy the cōfort of our friēds.  
Be now solicitous and sorrowful  
for thy sinnes; that in the day of  
iudgment thou maiest be secure  
in the company of the blessed  
soules: for then shall the iust stād  
in great constancy, against those  
that afflicted and oppressed thē.  
Then shall he stande to iudge,  
who now doth humbly submit  
himself to the iudgment of men.  
Then shall the poore and hum-  
ble haue great confidence, and  
the proud shall be compassed a-  
bout on all sides with feare.

5. Then wil it appeare, that  
he was wise in this world, who  
had heer learned to be as a foo-  
le and dispised for Christ. Then  
shall affliction patiently suffered  
delight vs, and iniquity shall stop  
her mouth. Then shall the de-  
uout reioyce, and the irreligious  
mourne. Then shall the chast-

86      *The following*

ced flesh more florish, then if it  
had byne alwaies nourished in  
delights. Then shall the poore  
garment shine, and the precious  
robes appeare contēptible. Then  
shall the meane cottage be more  
cōmended, then the sumptuous  
pallace. Then will constant pa-  
tience more auaille vs, then all  
earthly power. Then will simple  
obedience be more esteemed,  
then all worldly wisedome.

6. Then shal a good and pure  
conscience yelde vs more com-  
fort, then the profound learning  
of Philosophy. Then shall the  
cōtempt of riches weigh more,  
then al the wordlings treasures:  
Then wilt thou be more com-  
forted that thou hast praied de-  
voutly, then that thou hast fa-  
red daintily. Then wilt thou be  
more ioyfull that thou hast ob-  
served silēce, then that thou hast  
talked much. Then will good  
workes appeare of much more  
esteemē,

often, and keep themselves in al kinde of discipline. Consider the Carthusians, Cistercians, and the Religious men and women of diuers Orders, how they rise euery night to sing praises vnto God. And how vnseemly then it is for thee, to be slouthfull in so holy a worke. when as so great multitudes of religious persons, do begin to glorify God.

9 O, that we had nothing els to doe, but alwaies with our mouth, and whole hart to praise our Lord God! O, that thou mightest neuer haue need to eate, nor drinke, nor sleepe, but mightest alwaies praise God, & only imploy thy selfe in the exercises of spirit: thou shouldst then be much more happy, then now thou art, when for so manie necessities, thou art constrained to serue thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but only the spiritual refecti-  
otions



96      *The following*  
ctions of the soule, which (alas)  
we tast of too seldome.

10. When a man commeth  
to that estate, that he seeketh no  
comfort of any creature, then  
doth he begin to take perfect  
contentment, and delight in  
God. Then shall he be conten-  
ted with whatsoever doth befall  
him in this world. Then shall he  
neither reioyce in greate mat-  
ters, nor be sorrowful for small,  
but with great integrity & con-  
fidence comit himselfe to God,  
who shall be vnto him all in all:  
to whom nothing doth perish,  
nor dye, but all things doe liue  
vnto him, and serue him at a  
beck without delay.

11. Remember allwaies the  
end, and how that time lost ne-  
uer returnes. Without care and  
diligence, thou shalt neuer get  
vertues. If thou beginnest to  
wax colde, it will be euill with  
thee; but if thou giue thy selfe

to seruour of spirit, thou shalt  
find much peace, and feele lesse  
labour, through the assistance of  
Gods grace, and loue of vertue.  
The f. ruent and diligent man  
is ready, and prepared for all  
things. It is harder to resist vices  
and passions, then to toile in bo-  
dily labours. He that auoideth  
not small faults, by litte and lit-  
tle, falleth into greater. Thou  
wilt alwaies reioyce in the eue-  
ning, if thou spend the day pro-  
fitably. Be watchfull over thy  
selfe, stir vp thy selfe warne thy  
selfe, and whatsoeuer becomes  
of others, neglect not thy selfe.  
The greater violence thou vsest  
against thy selfe, the more thou  
shalt profit.

*The end of the first  
Booke.*

**G O E**

OF THE  
FOLLOWING  
OF CHRIST.

The second Booke.

*Of spirituall conuersation.*

CHAPT. I.

**T**He Kingdome of  
God is within you,  
sayth our Lord. Turne  
thee with thy  
whole hart vnto our  
Lord, and forsake this miserable  
world, and thy soule shall find  
rest. Learne to despise exteriour  
thinges, & to giue thy self to the  
interiour, and thou shalt per-  
ceauce the kingdome of God to  
come into thee. Forth king-  
dome of God is peace, and ioy  
in the holy Ghost, which is not  
giuen

of Christ. Lib. II. 99

giuen to the wicked. Christ will come into thee, and shew thee his diuine comfort if thou prepare for him a worthy mansion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaseth himselfe. The inward man he often visits, and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant comfort, much peace, wonderful familiarity.

O faithfull soule, make ready thy hart for this bridegrome, that he may vouchsafe to come vnto thee, and dwell within thee. For he saith: If any loue me, he wil keep my word, and we will come vnto him, and will make our aboad with him. Giue therefore vnto Christ a place in thy hart, and deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art rich, and he wil suffice thee. He will be thy faithfull and prouident helper in all things, so as thou shalt not

100    *The following*

need to trust in men. For men are soone changed, and quickly deceyued; but Christ remaineth foreuer, and standeth firmly vnto the end.

3. There is little trust to be put in a fraile and mortall man, though he be profitable & deare vnto thee: neither oughtest thou much to be grieued, if sometimes he crosse, and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be against thee; and so on the contrary, they often turne like vnto the winde. Put all thy trust in God, and feare and loue him: He will answere for thee, and do in all thinges what is best. Thou hast not heere a dwelling Citty, and whersoeuer thou be, thou art a stranger and pilgrime: neither shalt thou euer haue rest, vnlesse thou be perfectly vnited vnto Christ.

4. Why dost thou linger, and  
make



*of Christ. Lib. II. 101*

make delaies heere, since this is not the place of thy rest? In heauen ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be regarded as it were in the way.

All things passe away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not vnto them, least thou be enthralled, and so doest perish. Let thy thought be on the highest, and thy prayer directed vnto Christ without ceasing. If thou canst not contemplate high and heauenly things, rest thy selfe in the passion of Christ, and dwell willingly in the wounds of his sacred body. For if thou fly deuoutly vnto his holy wounds, and to the precious markes of his passiō, thou shalt feele great comfort in tribulation: neither wilt thou much care for being despised of men, and wilt easily beare the wordes of slanderous tongues.

5. Christ was also in the world despised, and in great necessity: forsaken by his acquaintance, and friends in the midst of slaunders. Christ would suffer, and be contemned; and darrest thou complaine? Christ had aduersaries and backbiters; and wilt thou haue all men thy friends and benefactors? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no aduersity happē vnto thee? If thou wilt suffer no aduersity, how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ, & for Christ, if thou desire to raigne with Christ.

6. If thou haddest once perfectly entred into the hart of Iesus, and tasted a little of his burning loue, then wouldest thou not weigh thy lowne commodity or discōmodity, but wouldest rather ioyce at slaunders, when they should chaunce to be cast vpon thee: for the loue of Iesus

Iesus maketh a man to despise himselfe. A louer of Iesus, and of truth, and a true spirituall person, and free from inordinate affections, can free lie turne himselfe vnto God, and lift himselfe aboue himselfe in spirit, and with great ioy of his soule rest in God.

71 He that iudgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are said, and esteemed to be, is truly wise, and taught rather by God then men. He that can liue spiritually, and make small reckoning of outward things: neither requireth places, nor attendeth times for performing of deuout exercises. A spiritual man quickly recollecteth himselfe: because he neuer yieldeth ouer himselfe wholly to outward things. He is not hindered by outward labour or busines, which may be necessary for the time, but as things fall

104. *The following*

out, so he frameth himselfe vn-  
to them. He that hath well or-  
dered and disposed all things  
within, careth little for the vai-  
ne inuentions, and peruerse in-  
clinations of men. So much is a  
man hindered & distracted, how  
much he draweth matters vnto  
himselfe.

8. If all went well with thee,  
and thou haddst thy hart well  
purged, all things would fall out  
to thy good and profit. But ma-  
nie things displease, and often  
trouble thee, because thou art  
not yet perfectly dead vnto thy  
selfe, nor free from the affection  
of earthly things. Nothing so de-  
fileth and intangleth the hart of  
man, as the impure loue to cre-  
atures. If thou refuse outward  
comfort, thou wilt be able to  
contemplate the things of hea-  
uen, and often receiue internall  
ioy.

Let regard be had, as in the first of  
the

Of humble submission.

CHAPT. II.

**R**espect not much who is with thee, or who is against thee. Endeauour, and take care, that God may be for thee in euery thing thou doest. Haue a good conscience, and God wil defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst hould thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord wil help thee. He knoweth the time, and manner, how to deliuer thee, and therefore thou oughtest to resign thy selfe vnto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliuer from all shame. Oftentimes it is very profitable, for the better keeping of humility, that others know & reprehend our faults.

When a man humbleth  
him.



himselfe for his faults, then he easily pacifieth others, & quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protecteth and deliuereth the humble: he loueth and comforteth the humble: vnto the humble man he inclineth himselfe: vnto the humble he giueth great grace, and after his humiliation, he raiseth him vnto glory. Vnto the humble he revealeth his secrets, and sweetly draweth and inuiterh him vnto himselfe. The humble when he hath receaued confusion, is in peace, for that he resteth in God, and relieth not on the world. Doe not thinke that thou hast profited any thing, vnlesse thou esteeme thy selfe inferiour to all.

*Of a good and peaceable man.*

### CHAPT. III.

**F**irst keep thy selfe in peace, and then maist thou pacify others.

others. A peaceable man doth  
more good, then he that is well  
learned. A passionate man tur-  
neth good into euill, and easily  
belieueth the worst. A good  
peaceable man turneth al things  
into good. He that is well in  
peace, is not suspicious of any,  
but he that is discontented, and  
troubled, is tossed with diuers  
suspitions: he is neither quiet  
himselfe, nor suffereth others to  
be quiet. He often speaketh that  
which he ought not to speake,  
and omitteth that which were  
more expedient for him to do.  
He considereth what others are  
bound to doe, & neglecteth that  
which he is bound to himselfe.  
First therefore haue a carefull  
zeale ouer thy selfe, & then thou  
maist iustly shew thy selfe zea-  
lous of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knowest well how  
to excuse, & colour thine owne  
deeds, and thou wilt not receaue  
the

the excuses of others. It were more meet, that thou didst accuse thy self, and excusedst thy brother. If thou wilt be borne withall, beare also with another. Be hold how for off thou art as yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moued with indignation, but only against himselfe. It is no greate matter to conuerse with the good, & those that are of a gentle disposition, for that is naturally pleasing to all, and euery one willingly enioyeth peace, and loueth those best that agree with him. But to be able, to liue peaceably with the vnquiet, & peruerse minds, or with the disorderly, or such as contradict vs, is a great grace, and very commendable.

3. Some there are, that keep themselves in peace, and are in peace also with others. And there are

are some, that nether are in peace themselves, nor suffer others to be in peace: they are troublesome to others, but alwaies more troublesome to themselves. And others there are that keep themselves in peace, & labour to bring others vnto peace. Our whole peace in this miserable life, consisteth rather in humble suffering, then in not feeling aduersities. He that can best tell how to suffer, will best keep himselfe in peace. He is a conquerour of himselfe, a Lord of the world, friend of Christ, and heyre of heauen.

*Of a pure mind, and vpright  
intention.*

CHAPT. IV.

**W**ith two wings man is lifted vp from earthly vanities, that is, with simplicity, & purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention. Purity in our affection.  
Sim.

110      *The following*

Simplicity fixeth the eyes of the soule in God. Puritie apprehendeth and tasteth his sweetnes. No good action wil hinder thee, if thou be inwardlye free from inordinate affection. If thou intend and seeke nothinge els but the will of God, and the profite of thy neighbour, thou shalt enjoy internall liberty. If thy hart were sincere and vpright, then euery creature woulde be vnto thee a looking glasse of life, and a booke of holy doctrine. There is no creature so little and abiect, that representeth not the goodnes of God.

2. If in thine owne hart thou wert good and pure, then thou wouldest be able to see and vnderstand all things without any impediment. A pure hart penetrateth heauen, and pierceth the depth of hell. Such a euery one is inwardly: for he iudgeth outwardlye. If there be ioy in the  
World,



*of Christ. Lib. II. III*

world, surely a man of a pure hart possesseth it. And if there be any where tribulation & affliction, an euill conscience feels it. As iron put into the fire leeseeth his rust, & becometh bright like fire: so he that wholly turneth himselfe vnto God, becometh feruent & is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold: then he is afraid of a small labour, and willingly receaueth externall comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himselfe perfectly, and to walke manfully in the way of God, then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grieuous vnto him.

*Of the consideration of ones selfe.*

**CHAPT. V.**

**W**E cannot trust much to our selues, for that grace of en-  
times

times and vnderstanding is wanting. There is but little light in vs, & that which we haue, we quickly lose by our negligence, And often times we do not perceauē our owne inward blindness. We often do euil, & excuse it worse. We are sometimes moued with passion, and we thinke it to be zeale. We reprechend small things in others, and passe ouer greater matters in our selues. We quickly seele, & weigh what we suffer at the hands of others: but we mind not what others suffer from vs. He that doth well and deeply consider his owne works, will find little cause to iudge hardly another.

2 A spirituall man preferreth the care of himselfe, before all other cares. And he that diligently attendeth vnto himselfe, doth seldome speake much of others. Thou wilt neuer be recollected & deuout, vnlesse thou passe

passe ouer other mens matters  
 with silence, and looke especial-  
 lie to thy selfe. If thou attend  
 wholly vnto God and thy selfe,  
 thou wilt be little moued with  
 whatsoeuer thou seest abroad.  
 Where art thou, when thou art  
 not with thy selfe? And when  
 thou hast runne ouer all, what  
 hast thou profited, if thou doest  
 neglect thy selfe? If thou desirest  
 peace of mind and true vnion,  
 thou must esteeme little of all  
 earthly thinges, and looke only  
 to thy selfe.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit  
 much, if thou keepe thy selfe  
 free frō all temporal cares. Thou  
 shalt hinder thy selfe greatly, if  
 thou esteeme any thing of this  
 world. Let nothing be great vn-  
 to thee, nothing high, nothinge  
 grateful, nothing acceptable, but  
 only God himselfe purely, or  
 that which is for God. Esteeme  
 all comfort vaine, which thou

114. The following  
receauest from any creature. A  
soule that loueth God despiseth  
all things that be inferiour vnto  
God. God alone is euerlasting,  
and of infinite greatnes, filling  
all creatures: the comfort of the  
soule, and the true ioy of the  
hart.

*Of the comfort of a good  
Conscience.*

CHAPT. VI.

**T**He glory of a good man, is  
the testimonye of a good  
conscience. Have a good con-  
science, and thou shalt euer haue  
ioy. A good conscience is able  
to beare much, and is cheerefull  
in aduersities. An euill conscien-  
ce is alwaies fearful & vnquiet.  
Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy  
hart doth not reprehend thee.  
Do thou neuer reioyce, but whe-  
n thou hast done well. Sinners ha-  
ue neuer true mirth, nor feele in-  
ward

ward peace: because there is no peace to the impious, saith our Lord. And if they shoulde say: We are in peace, no euill shall fall vpon vs, and who shall dare to hurt vs? belieue them not: for vpon a suddaine will arise the wrath of God, and their deedes shall be turned into nothing, and their conceits shall perish.

2. To glory in tribulation, is no hard thing for him that loueth; for to glory so, is to glory in the Crosse of our Lord. That glorie is short, which is giuen and receaued from men. Sorrow alwaies accompanieth the glorie of the world. The glory of the good is in their consciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladnes of the iust is of God, and in God: and their ioy is of the truth. He that desireth true and euerlasting glory, careth not for that which passeth away with time. And he that seeketh tem-



**¶ 16      The following**

porall glory, or contemneth it not from his harte, shewes himselfe but little to esteeme of the glorie of heauen. He enjoyeth great tranquillitie and peace of mind, that careth neither for the prayses, nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easlye be content and pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him: nor the more abiect though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art: neither canst thou be trulye said to be greater, then what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the hart. Man considereth the deedes, but God weigheth the intentions. To do alwaies well, and to esteeme little of himselfe, is a token of an humble minde. To refuse to be

com-

comforted by any creature, is a signe of great purity, and inward confidence.

4 He that seeketh no outward witnes for himselfe, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himselfe vnto God. For not he, that commendeth himselfe, the same is approued (saith S. Paul) but whom God commendeth. To walke inwardlye with God, and not to be possessed with any outwarde affection, is the state of an inwarde, and spirituall man.

*Of the loue of Iesus aboue  
all things.*

CHAPT. VII.

**B**lessed is he that vnderstandeth what it is to loue Iesus, and to despise himselfe for Iesus. Thou oughtest to leaue thy beloued, for thy beloued, for that Iesus will be beloued alone

aboue all thinges. The loue of things created is deceiptfull and vnconstant. the loue of Iesus is faithfull and constant. He that cleaueth vnto creatures, shall fall with that which is subiect to fal. He that imbraceth Iesus shal stand firmly for euer. Loue him, and keepe him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forsak thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. Thou must ooe be left of me, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Liue and die with Iesus, and commit thy selfe vnto his trust, who when all faile, can alone help thee. Thy Beloued is of that nature, that he will none of that which appertaineth to others: but will haue thy hart alone, and sit like a King in his owne throne. If thou couldest purge thy selfe perfectlie of all creatures, Iesus woulde willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoeuer thou puttest in men, out of Iesus, is  
all

of Christ. Lib. II. 119

all no better then lost. Trust not,  
nor rely vpon a reed ful of wind:  
for that all flesh is as hay, and all  
the glory thereof shall wither a-  
way, as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be de-  
ceaued, if thou looke only to  
the outward shew of men. And  
if in them thou seekest thy com-  
fort and profit, thou shalt often  
feele losse. If thou seekest Iesus  
in all thinges, thou shalt surely  
finde Iesus. But if thou seekest  
thy selfe, thou shalt also find thy  
selfe, but to thy owne harme.  
For man doth more hurt him-  
selfe, if he seeke not Iesus, then  
the whole world and all his ad-  
uersaries could annoy him.

*Of familiar conuersation  
with Iesus.*

CHAPT. VIIII.

**W**hen Iesus is present, all is  
well, and nothing ferreth

10 *The following*  
difficult: but when Iesus is absent, euery thing is hard. When Iesus speaketh not inwardly vnto vs, our comfort is nothinge worth: but if Iesus speake but one worde, we feele much consolation. Did not Mary Magdalen presently rise from the place where she wept, when Martha saide vnto her: Thy maister is heere, and calleth thee? Happye is the houre, when Iesus calleth from teares of spiritual ioy. How dry and harde art thou without Iesus? How foolish and vaine, if thou desire any thing out of Iesus? Is not this a greater losse then if thou shouldst loose the whole world?

2. What can the world profite thee without Iesus? To be without Iesus, is a grieuous hell, and to be with Iesus, is a sweete Paradise. If Iesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Iesus, findeth a good treasure.



sure: yea a good above al goods.  
And he that leesech Iesus, leesech  
too much, & more the whole  
world. He is most poore, that li-  
ueth without Iesus: and he most  
rich, that is well with Iesus.

3. It is a great skill to know  
how to conuerse with Iesus: and  
a great wisdom, to know how  
to keepe Iesus. Be humble, and  
peaceable, and Iesus wil be with  
thee. Be deuout and quiet, and  
Iesus will stay with thee. Thou  
maist driue away Iesus and loose  
his grace, if thou giuest thy selfe  
to outward things. And if thou  
shouldest driue him from thee,  
and leese him, vnto whom wilt  
thou flye, and what friend wilt  
thou then seeke? Without a  
friend, thou canst not well liue:  
and if Iesus be not above all a  
friend vnto thee; thou shalt be  
too too sorrowfull and desolate.  
Thou doest therefore foolishly, if  
thou doest trust or reioice in any  
other.

2

# The following

other. It is better for thee to  
haue all the world against thee,  
then Iesus offended with thee.  
Amongst all things therefore that  
be deare vnto thee, let Iesus a-  
lone be thy chiefest beloued.

4 Loue all for Iesus, but Ie-  
sus for himselfe. Iesus Christ a-  
lone is especially to be beloued;  
who alone is found to be good,  
& faithfull aboue all friends. For  
him & in him, let aswel frieds as  
foes be deare vnto thee: and all  
these are to be prayed for, that  
all may know and loue him. Ne-  
uer desire to be singularly com-  
mended or beloued, for that ap-  
pertaineth only vnto God, who  
hath none like vnto himself. Ne-  
ther do thou desire that the hart  
of any, should be set on thee, nor  
do thou set thy hart on the loue  
of any: but let Iesus be in thee,  
& in euery vertuous & good mā.  
s. Be pure and free within,  
and intangle nor thy hate with  
any

any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and carry a pure harte to God, if thou wilt consider, and proue, and see how sweet our Lord is. And truly, vnlesse thou be preuented, and drawne by his grace, thou shalt neuer attaine to that happines, to forsake and cast away all, that thou alone maist be vnited to him alone. For when the grace of God commeth vnto a man, then he is strong, and nothinge is hard vnto him. And when it goeth awaye, he is poore and weake, and as it were left vnto the will of whomsoever will afflict him. In this thou oughtest not to be deiected, nor despaire; but to resign thy selfe with all indifferēcy vnto the wil of God, and to beare all thinges that befall thee, for the glory of Christ: for after winter followeth summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, faire weather.

of

The following  
Of the want of all comfort.

CHAPT. IX.

**I**T is no great matter to despise humane comfort, when we haue diuine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and diuine comfort: and for the honour and glorie of God, to be willinge to endure desolation of hart, and to seeke himselfe in nothing, nor to regard his owne merit. What greate matter is it, if thou be cheerful and deuout at the comminge of heauenly grace? This hour is wished for of all men. He rideth easily, whom the grace of God carrieth. And what meruaile, if he feele not his burden, who is borne vp by the Almighty, and led by the greatest guide?

2. We are alwaies willing to haue somethinge for our comfort: and a man doth hardly put off, and forsake himselfe. The  
holy

holy martyr S. Laurence, overcame the worlde with his Pre-  
late, because he detpised what-  
soever seemed delightsome in  
the worlde: and for the loue of  
Christ, he patiently suffered the  
high Priest of God S. Syxtus to  
be taken from him, whom he  
most loued. He ouercame ther-  
fore the loue of man by the loue  
of the Creator, & he rather chose  
the diuine pleasure, thē humane  
comfort. See thou also learne to  
forsake some necessary thing, &  
a beloued friend for the loue of  
God. Be not grieued when thou  
art forsaken by a friend, know-  
ing that we all at length must be  
separated one from another.

3. A man must fight long, and  
with a constant minde, before  
he get the victory, and be able  
to place his whole harte in God.  
When a man confideth in him-  
selfe, he easilye slideth vnto hu-  
mane cōforts. But a true louer of  
Christ,



Christ, and a diligent follower of vertue, giueth not himselfe to such solace, nor seeketh sensible sweetnes, but rather forcible exercises, and to sustaine hard labours for Christ.

4. When therefore spirituall cōfort is giuen thee from God, receaue it thankfully, but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed vp, ioy not too much, neither do thou presume vainely: but be rather the more humble for that grace, and more wary and fearefull in all thy actions: for that houre will passe away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despaire not presently; but with humility and patience, attend the heauenly visitation: for God is able againe to giue thee greater consolation. This is not new, nor strange vnto them, that haue experience in the way of God:  
for

for in the great Saints and ancient Prophets, there was oftentimes such kind of alteration.

5. For which cause one whē he had grace, said: I said in my plenty, I will not be moued euerlastingly. But when this was gone from him, he addeth what he found in himselfe, saying: Thou turnedst thy face frō me, and I became troubled. Yet doth he not despaire in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth vnto our Lord, & saith: Vnto thee (o Lord) I will cry, & I will pray vnto my God. Lastly he receaueth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying: Our Lord hath heard me, and taken pittie on me: our Lord is become my helper. But wherein? Thou hast turned (saith he) my sorrow into ioy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladnes. If great Saints haue byn so deale  
With.

withall, we that are poore and weake, ought not to despaire, if we be sometimes feruent, and sometimes colde; for thy spirit commeth and goeth, accordinge to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Iob saith: Thou visitest him earlie in the morning; & suddainly thou pro-  
nest him

6. Wherupon therefore can I hope, or wherin ought I to trust, but in the great mercie of God alone, and in the only hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enioy the presence of good men, or deuout brethren; or faithfull friendes, or holy bookes, or learned treatises, or sweet songs and hymnes, al these helpe little, and haue little sauour, when grace forsaketh me, and I remaine left in my owne pouertie. At such a tyme there is no better remedie then patience, and the resigning of my selfe vnto the will  
of

of God. 7. I neuer founde any so religious and deuout, that hath not had sometimes a withdrawinge of grace, or felt not a decrease of feruour. There was neuer Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated, who first or last, was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the highe contemplation of God, who hath not byne exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For tentation going before, is wont to be a signe of ensuing comfort. And vnto those that are proued by tēations, heauenlye comfort is promised. He that shal overcome, saith he, I will giue him to eate of the wood of life.

8. But diuine comfort is giuen, that a man may be stronger to beare aduersities. There followeth also tēation, least we should waxe proud of that good. The

diuell

diuell sleepeth not, neither  
our flesh as yet dead: therefore  
cease not to prepare thy selfe to  
the battaile: for on thy right  
hand, and on thy left, are ene-  
mies that neuer rest.

*Of thankfulnessse for the  
Grace of God.*

CHAPT. X.

**W**Hy seekest thou rest, since  
thou art borne to labour?  
Dispose thy selfe to patience, ra-  
ther then to comforts: & to the  
bearing of the Crosse, rather then  
to gladnes. What secular person  
is there, that would not wil-  
lingly receaue spirituall ioy and  
cōfort, if he could alwaies haue  
it? Spirituall comforts exceed al  
the delights of the world, and al  
the pleasures of the flesh. All  
worldly delights are either vai-  
ne, or vncleane: but spiritual de-  
lights are only pleasant and ho-  
nest,



their life time conformed themselves vnto Christ crucified, shall draw neere vnto our Lord with great confidence.

2 Why therefore fearest thou to take vp the Crosse, which leadeth thee to a kingdome? In the Crosse is health, in the Crosse is life, in the Crosse is protection against our enemies, in the Crosse is infusion of heauenly sweetness, in the Crosse is strength of mind, in the Crosse is ioy of spirit, in the Crosse is the height of vertue, in the Crosse is the perfection of sanctity. There is noe health of the soule, nor hope of euerlasting life, but in the Crosse. Take vp therefore thy Crosse and follow Iesus, and thou shalt go into life euerlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Crosse, and is dead for thee on the Crosse, that thou maiest also beare thy Crosse, and desire to dye on the Crosse with him. For if thou  
dyest

140      *The following*

dyeſt with him, thou ſhalt alſo  
liue with him. And if thou be his  
cōpanion in payne, thou ſhalt be  
partaker with him alſo in glory.

3. Behould in the Croſſe all  
deſth conſiſt, and all lyeth in en-  
ding our life vpon it: for there is  
no other way vnto life, and vnto  
true inward peace, but the way  
of the Holy Croſſe, and of daily  
morification. Go where thou  
wilt, ſeek whatſoeuer thou wilt:  
thou ſhalt not find a higher way  
aboue, nor a ſafer way below,  
then the way of the holy Croſſe.  
Diſpoſe and order all thinges ac-  
cording to thy will, and iudge-  
ment: yet thou ſhalt euer find,  
that of neceſſity thou muſt ſuf-  
fer ſome-what, either willingly  
or againſt thy will, ſo as thou  
ſhalt neuer fully auoide the Croſ-  
ſe. For either thou ſhalt feele  
payne in thy body, or in thy  
ſoule thou ſhalt ſuffer tribulatiō  
of ſpirit.

4. Som-

nance, yet is it little. And if he should attaine to all knowledge; he is yet far off. And if he should haue great vertue, and very frequent deuotion, yet there is much wantinge: to wit, one thinge which is most necessary for him. What is that? That leauing all, he forsake himselfe, and go perfectlie from himselfe, and retaine nothinge of selfe loue. And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him thinke that he hath done nothinge.

5. Let him not weigh that much, which might be much esteemed, but according to truth; let him affirme himself to be an vnprofitable seruant, as our Sauiour hath said: When you shall haue done all thinges that are commanded you, say: We are vnprofitable seruants. They may be trulye poore in spirit and naked, and say with the Prophet:

I am

I am alone and poore: yet no man richer, no man more powerfull, no man more free then he that can leaue himselfe and all thinges, and put himselfe in the meanest and lowest place.

*Of the high way of the holy Crosse.*

CHAPT. XII.

**V**Nto many seemeth harde this speach: Deny thy selfe, take vp thy Crosse, and follow Iesus. But it will be much harder, to heare that last worde: Get yee away from me, yee cursed into euerlastinge fire. For they that now willingly heare & follow the word of the Crosse, shal not then feare to heare the sentence of euerlastinge damnation. This signe of the Crosse shal be in heauen, when our Lord shal come to iudgment. Then all the seruants of the Crosse, who in  
their

nest, produced by vertues, and infused by God into pure harts. But no man can alwaies enioy these diuine cōforts; according to his desire: for the time of tēpōtation is not long away.

2. False freedom of mind, and great trust of our selues, is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giuing grace: but man doth euill in not returning it againe wholly vnto God, with thankesgiuing. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in vs, because we are vngratefull to the giuer: and re- turne them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace is euer due to him that is thankesfull, and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be giuen to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolatiō that taketh from me compun- ction: nor that contemplan- tion which breedeth a haughty mind



For all that is highe, is not holy,  
 nor all that is sweet, good: nor  
 euerye desire, pure: nor euerye  
 thinge that is deare vnto vs, is  
 gratefull to God. I do willingly  
 accept of that grace, whereby I  
 may euer become more humble  
 and fearefull, and be made more  
 ready & able to forsake my self.  
 He that is taught by the gift of  
 grace, and by the scourge of the  
 withdrawinge thereof, will not  
 dare to attribut any good to him  
 selfe: but wil rather acknowledg  
 himselfe poore, and naked. Giue  
 vnto God, that which is Gods,  
 and ascribe vnto thy selfe, that  
 which is thine owne: that is, giue  
 thanks vnto God for his grace,  
 and acknowledge that nothinge  
 is to be attributed to thee, but  
 only sinne, and the punishment  
 due thereunto.

4. Content thy selfe, and de-  
 sire alwaies the meanest & low-  
 est thinges, and the highest shall  
 be

4. Sometimes thou shalt be forsaken of God, sometimes thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbours; & which is more, oftentimes thou shalt be irksome to thy self, neither canst thou be deliuered or eased by any remedy or comfort: but so long as pleaseth God, thou oughtest to beare it. For God will haue thee learne to suffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou submit thy selfe wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man hath so liuely a feeling of the passion of Christ, as he who hath chaunced to suffer the like. The Crosse therefore is alwaies readye, and euery where attendeth thee. Thou canst not escape it, whither soeuer thou flyest, for wheresoeuer thou goest, thou carriest hy self with thee, and shalt ever finde thy selfe both aboue and below, without and within; which way

142 The following  
way soeuer thou doest turne  
thee alwayes thou shalt find the  
Crosse: and euerie where of ne-  
cessity thou must haue patience,  
if thou wilt haue inward peace,  
and deserue an euerlasting  
Crowne.

5. Yf thou beare the Crosse  
willingly, it will beare thee, and  
lead thee to thy desired end: to  
wit, where there shalbe an end  
of suffering, though heere there  
shall not. Yf thou beare it vn-  
willingly, thou makest for thy  
selfe a new burthen, and increa-  
sest thy load, and yet notwith-  
standing thou must beare it. Yf  
thou cast away one Crosse, with-  
out doubt thou shalt finde ano-  
ther, and that perhaps a more  
heauy.

6. Thinkest thou to escape  
that, which no man could euer  
auoyd? Which of the Saints in  
the world was without Crosses,  
and tribulations? Yea ye Iesus-  
Christ

hath many desirous of comfort,  
but few of tribulation. He findeth  
many companions of his  
table, but few of his abstinence.  
All desire to reioyce with him,  
few will suffer any thinge for  
him, or with him. Many follow  
Iesus vnto the breaking of bread:  
but few to the drinke of the  
Chalice of his passion. Many re-  
uerence his miracles, few fol-  
low the ignominy of his Crosse.  
Many loue Iesus, as long as ad-  
uersities happen not. Many prai-  
se and blesse him, as long as they  
receaue any comfort from him.  
But if Iesus hide himselfe, and  
leaueth them but a while, they fall  
either into complaint, or into  
too much deiection of mind.

2. But they that loue Iesus for  
Iesus, and not for some comfort  
of their owne, blesse him in all  
tribulation and anguish of hart,  
as well as in the greatest com-  
fort. And although he shoulde

neuer giue them comfort, they notwithstandinge woulde euer prayse him, & alwaies giue him thanks.

3. O how powerful is the pure loue of Iesus, which is mixed with no selfe loue nor proper interest! Are they not all to be called hirelings, that euer seeke comforts? Do they not shew themselves, to be rather louers of themselves, then of Christ, that alwaies think of their commodity and gaine? Where may one be found that will serue God, without looking for reward?

4. It is hard to find any one so spirituall, that is free from the loue of all earthlye thinges. For where is any that is indeed poor in spirit, and free from all affection of creatures? for hence, and from the end of the world is his price. If a man shoulde giue all his wealth, yet is it nothinge. And if he shoulde do great penance



be giuen thee: for the highest,  
stande not without the lowest.  
The highest Saints before God,  
are the least in their owne iudg-  
ments. And how much the more  
glorious, so much the humbler  
within themselves. Those that  
are full of truth, and heauenlye  
glory, are not desirous of the vai-  
ne glory of this worlde. Those  
that are firmly settled and groun-  
ded in God, cā no way be proud,  
And they that ascribe all vnto  
God, what good soeuer they  
haue receaued, seeke not glorie  
one of another: but would haue  
that glory which is from God a-  
lone: and desire aboue all things  
to praise God in himselfe, and in  
all the Saints, and alwaies tend  
vnto the same.

5. Be therefore gratefull for  
the least gift, and thou shalt be  
made worthy to receaue greater.  
Let the least be vnto thee also as  
the greatest: & the most contēp-  
tible

trible as an especiall gift. If thou consider the worth of the giuer, no gift will seeme little, or of meane esteeme. For it is not little that is giuen by the oueralligne Maiesty of God. Yea if he should giue punishmēt and stripes, it ought to be gratefull, for that he doth is alwaies for our saluation, wha soeuer he permitte to happen vnto vs. He that desireth to keepe the grace of God, let him be thankful for the grace giuen, and patient for the takinge away thereof. Let him pray that it may returne. Let him be wary and humble, least he leese it.

*How few the louers of the  
Crosse of Christ are.*

CHAPT. XI.

**I**esus hath now many louers  
of his heauenly kingedome,  
but few bearers of his Crosse. He  
hath

Christ our Lord was neuer one  
houre without paine of suffer-  
ing, so long as he liued. Christ  
(saith he) ought to suffer, and  
rise againe from death, and so  
to enter into his glorie: and how  
doest thou seeke any other way,  
then this high way, which is the  
way of the holy Crosse?

7. The whole life of Christ  
was a Crosse and Martyrdome:  
and doest thou seeke rest & ioy?  
Thou art deceaued, thou art de-  
ceaued, if thou seekest any other  
thing, then to suffer tribulation  
for this whole mortall life is full  
of miseries, and environed on  
euery side with Crosse. And  
how much the more one hath  
profited in spirit; so much the  
heavier Crosse he oftentimes  
findeth: for the loue he beareth  
to God, increaseth the griefe  
which he endureth for his ba-  
nishment.

8. But yet this man, though  
for

144 The following

so many wayes afflicted, is not without the remedy of spirituall consolation, for the great good which he perceaueth to grow vnto him, by the bearing of his Crosse. For whilest he willingly putteth himselfe vnder it, all the burthen of tribulation, is turned into the confidence of diuine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inwarde grace. And sometymes he is so comforted with the desire of tribulation, and aduersity, for the loue of conforming himselfe to the Crosse of Christ, that he would not wish at any time, to be without sorrow and tribulation: because he beleueth, that so much the more gratefull he shall be vnto God, how much the more he can suffer for him. This is not a worke of humane vertue, but it is the grace of Christ,

Christ, that can, & doth so much in fraile flesh: that what naturally it alwaies abhorreth and flyeth, that by feruour of spirit, it taketh hold on and loueth.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to beare the Crosse, to loue the Crosse, to chastice and subdue the body, to fly honors, to suffer contumelies with a ioyfull hart, to despise himself, and to wish to be despised, to beare all aduersities, and damages, and to desire no prosperity in this world. Yf thou considerest thy selfe, thou shalt be able to performe no such matter of thy selfe. But if thou trustest in our Lord, strength shall be giue thee from heauen, and the world and flesh, shall be made subiect to thy commaund. Neither shalt thou feare thy enemy the Diuel, if thou bee armed with faith, & signed with the Crosse of Christ.

10. Resolue therefore with thy

K

selfe,



selfe, like a good and faithfull  
seruant of Christ, to beare man-  
fully the Crosse of thy Lord,  
who was crucified for thy loue.  
Prepare thy selfe to beare many  
aduersities and diuers kinds of  
troubles in this miserable life:  
for so it wilbe with thee, wher-  
soeuer thou be: & so surely thou  
wilt finde it, wheresoeuer thou  
hide thy selfe. So it must be, and  
there is no remedy, or meanes  
to auoide tribulation and sor-  
row, but to beare them. Drinke  
of the chalice of our Lord wil-  
lingly, if thou wilt be his friend,  
and desirest to haue part with  
him. Leauē the desire of com-  
fortes, to God: let him doe ther-  
in as shall best please him. Set  
thou thy hart vpon the suffering  
of tribulations, and account the  
the greatest comforts, for that  
the passions of this life, are not  
condigne to future glory, al-  
though thou alone couldest suf-  
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fer them all.

II. When thou shalt come to this estate, that tribulation shall seeme sweet, and pleasant vnto thee for. Christ, then thou maist thinke it is wel with thee, for thou hast found a Paradise vpon earth. As long as it is grieuous vnto thee to suffer, and that thou desirest to fly it, so long shalt thou be ill at ease: & the tribulation thou flyest, will follow thee euery where.

12- If thou settest thy selfe to that thou oughtest, to witt, to suffer, and to dy to thy selfe, it wil quickly be better with thee, and thou shalt finde peace. Althoughe thou shouldest haue bene rapt euen vnto the thirde heauen with Paul, thou art not for this assured, that thou shalt suffer no contradiction. I (saith Iesus) will shew him how great thinges he must suffer for my name. It resteth therefore, that

148      *The following*  
thou suffer, if thou wilt loue Ie-  
sus, and perpetually serue him.

13. O, would to God, thou  
wert worthy to suffer something  
for Iesus! how great glory would  
it be vnto thee, what ioy to all  
the Saints of God, how great  
edificatiō also to thy neighbour!  
For all do commend patience,  
though few desir to suffer. With  
great reason thou oughtest to  
be willing to suffer a little for  
Christ; since many suffer far  
greater thinges for the loue of  
the world.

14. Know for certaine, that  
thou oughtest to lead a dyinge  
life. And how much the more e-  
very one dieth to himselfe; soe  
much the more doth he begin  
to liue to God. No man is fit to  
attaine vnto heauenly thinges,  
vnlesse he submit himself to the  
bearing of aduersities for Christ.  
Nothing is more gratefull vnto  
God, nothing more wholesome  
to

to thee in this world, then to suffer willingly for Christ. And if it were in thy choyce, thou shouldest rather wish to suffer aduersities for Christ, then to enioy the delight of many comforts: because by these meanes thou shouldest be more like vn. to Christ, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our merit, & the perfectiō of our estate, consisteth not in much sweetnes and comfortes, but rather in suffering great afflictions and tribulations.

15. If there had ben any better thing, and more profitable to the health of man then suffering, surely Christ would haue shewed it by word, & example. But he plainly exhorted all the disciples that followed him, and all that desire to follow him, to the bearing of the Crosse, and saith: If any man will come after me, let him deny himselfe

**¶** So **¶** The following  
and take vp his Crosse, and fol-  
low me. So as when we haue  
read and searched all, let this be  
the last conclusion: That by ma-  
ny tribulatiōs we must enter into  
the kingdome of God.

**The end of the second  
Booke.**

**O F**



OF THE  
FOLLOWING  
OF CHRIST.

The third Booke.

*Of the inward speach of Christ  
vnto a faithfull soule.*

CHAPT. I.

**I** Will heare what our  
Lord God will speak  
in me. Blessed is the  
soule that heareth  
our Lord speaking  
in her: and receaueth from his  
mouth, the word of comfort.  
Blessed are those eares that re-  
ceave the sound of the voice,  
and listen not to the whispe-  
rings of the world. Blessed in-  
deed are those eares that harken

not to the voice which soundeth outwardly, but vnto truth which teacheth inwardly. Blessed are the eies that being shut vp to outward thinges, are attentive to those things that are internall. Blessed are they that enter into the inward thinges, and indeauour to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises to the attaining of heauenly secrets. Blessed be they that delight to attend to the seruice of God, and cast from them all impediments of this world.

2. Consider these thinges, my soule, and shut vp the dore of thy sensuall desires: that thou maist heare what thy Lord God speakes in thee. Thus saith thy beloued: I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life. Keepe thy selfe with me, and thou shalt find peace. Forsake all transitory thinges, and seeke those that be  
euer.

everlasting. What are temporall things, but deceauing snares? and what do all creatures auaille thee, if thou bee forsaken by the Creatour? Forsake therefore all earthly things, and labour to please thy Creatour, & be faithfull vnto him, that thou maist attaine vnto true happines.

*That truth speaketh inward-  
lie without noyse of  
Wordes.*

CHAPT. II.

**S**Peake Lord, for thy seruante heareth. I am thy seruant graunt me vnderstanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Stir vp my hart to heare the wordes of thy mouth. Let thy speech descend as the dew into my soule. The children of Israel in times past said vnto Moyse: Speak thou vnto vs, and we shal heare thee: Let not our Lord  
speake

154      *The following*

speake vnto vs, least perhaps we  
dye. Not so Lord, not so. I be-  
seeche thee, but rather with the  
Prophet Samuel. I humbly and  
earnestly intreat: speak Lord, for  
thy seruant heareth. Let not  
Moyse speake vnto me, nor any  
of the Prophets, but thou rather  
speake, my Lord God, the inspi-  
rer, and enlighener of all the  
Prophets: for thou alone with-  
out them, cāst perfectly instruct  
me, but they without thee, can  
profit nothing.

2. They can pronounce wor-  
des, but they giue not spirit.  
They speak maruelous wel, but  
if thou hould thy peace, they  
inflame not the hart. They deli-  
uer the letters, but thou openest  
the sense. They bring forth my-  
steries, but thou disclorest the  
vnderstanding of sealed thinges.  
They declare thy commande-  
ments, but thou helpest to fulfil  
them. They shew the way, but  
show

thou giuest strength to walke in it. They worke only exteriorly, but thou instructest & enlightnest the hartes. They water outwardly, but thou giuest fruitfulness. They sound forth wordes, but thou giuest vnderstanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore Moyſes speake vnto me, but thou my Lord God, the euerlasting truth, least perhaps I should dye, and become without fruit, if I be warned outwardly only, & not inflamed within: least the word heard and not fulfilled, knowen and not loued, believed and not obserued, should increase my iudgmēt. Speak therefore Lord, for thy seruāt heareth, for thou hast the wordes of euerlasting life. Speake vnto me to the comfort of my soule, and to the amendment of my whole life: & to thy prayſe and glory, & euerlasting honor.



That the wordes of God are  
to be heard with humility,  
and that many weigh  
them not.

## CHAPT. III.

**S**onne hear my words, words  
of great comfort, excelling  
all the knowledg of the Philoso-  
phers and wise men of this  
world. My wordes are spirit and  
life, not to be weighed by the  
vnderstanding of man. They  
are not to be drawne to vaine li-  
king, but to heard with silence,  
and to be receaued with all hu-  
mility and great affection. And  
I said: Blessed is the man whom  
thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and  
shalt teach thy law, that thou  
maist give him quiernes frō euil  
daies, & that he be not destroyed  
vpon earth.

2. I (saith our Lord) haue  
taught

taught the Prophets from the beginning, and cease not continually to speake to euery one: but many are deafe, and giue no care to my speach. The greater number doe more willingly listen to the world, then to God: & follow sooner the desires of their flesh, then the wil of God. The world promiseth temporall and small thinges, and is serued with great diligence: I promise most high and eternall thinges, and the hartes of men are nothing moued with it. Who is he that serueth and obeyeth me: With equall care to that with which the world, and the Lords therof are serued? Blush Sidon, saith the sea. And if thou aske the cause, heare wherfore. For a little prebend, a long iorney is vndertaken: for euerlasting life many will scarce once lift a foote from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after

158     *The following*

greedily: for a penny sometimes there is great contention: for a vaine thing and sleight promise, men cease not to toile day and night.

3. But alas for an vchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour and glory without end, they are loath to take the least paines. Blush therefore shouthfull and complayning seruant, that they are found more ready to destruction, then thou to life. They reioyce more at vanity, then thou at truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope: but my promise deceaueth none, nor sendeth him away epty that trusteth in me. I will giue that which I haue promised. I will fulfill that which I haue said, but to him that remaines faithfull in my loue to the ende, I am the rewarde of all good, and do try my deuout seruantes in forcible proofes.

proofes.

4. Write my wordes in thy hart, and thinke diligently of them: for they will be necessary in time of tentation. What thou vnderstandest not when thou readest, thou shalt know in the day of visitation. I am wont to visit my elect two seuerall waies, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I dayly read two lessons vnto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increase of vertues. He that hath my words & despiseth them, hath within himselfe that shall iudge him at the last day.

*A Prayer to implore the grace  
of deuotion.*

5. Lord my God, thou art all that I can desire. Who am I, that dare speak vnto thee? I am thy poorest seruant, and a most vile worme: much more poore and  
con-

contemptible, then I can  
dare expresse. Remember Lord  
that I am nothing, haue nothing  
and can do nothing. Thou alone  
art good, iust, and holy; thou canst  
doe all thinges, performest all  
thinges, leauing only a sinner  
voide of all good. Call to mind  
thy mercies, & fill my hart with  
thy grace, who wilt not that thy  
workes be voyd.

6. How can I support my self  
in this miserable life, vnlesse thy  
mercy and grace comfort me?  
Turne not thy face from me: de-  
lay not thy visitation; draw not  
away thy cōfort, least my soule  
become as earth without water  
vnto thee. Lord teach me to ful-  
fil thy wil; teach me to liue wor-  
thily and hūbly in thy sight; for  
thou art my wisdom, thou dost  
perfectly knowe me, and didest  
know me before the world was  
made, and before I was borne in  
the world.

That



That we ought to liue in truth  
and humilitie in the  
sight of God.

CHAPT. IV.

**S**onne, walke in my sight in  
sincerity and truth; and euer  
seeke me in playnes of hart. He  
that walketh in my sight in tru-  
the, shall be defended from euil  
incursions, and truth shall deliuer  
him from seducers, and from  
the detractions of the wicked.  
If truth shall haue deliuered  
thee, thou shalt be truly free,  
and shalt not care for vaine spe-  
aches of men. Lord it is true, ac-  
cording as thou saist, so I beseech  
thee let it be done with me, and  
keep me, and bring me to a hap-  
py end. Let thy truth teach me,  
and let it deliuer me from all e-  
uill affection and inordinat loue:  
and I shall walke with thee in  
great freedome of hart.

2. I will teach thee (sayth the Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Thinke of thy sinnes with great sorrow, and grief, and neuer esteeme thy selfe any thing for thy good works. Thou art in verie deed a sinner, and subiect to many passions. Of thy selfe thou alwaies rendest to nothing, and art quickly cast downe & overcome: quickly troubled, quickly dissolued. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory. but many thinges for which thou oughtest to humble, and despise thy self: for thou art much weaker, then thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing seeme much vnto thee, whatsoever thou doest. Let nothing seeme great, nothing precious, and wonderfull, nothing worthy of estimation: nothing high, nothing truly commendable, and

and to be desired, but that which is euerlasting. Let the eternall Truth aboue all thinges please thee. Let thy owne great vnworthines alwaies displease thee. Feare nothing, blame, and fly nothing so much, as thy sinnes, and vices: which ought to displease thee more, the the losse of any thing whatsoeuer. Some walke not sincerly in my sight, but led by a certaine curiosity, and pride, will know my secrets, and vnderstand the highe mysteries of God, neglecting themselves and their owne saluation. These oftentimes (for that I resist them) doe fall into great tentations and sinnes, for their pride and curiosity.

4. Feare the iudgements of God, dread the wrath of the almighty. But discusse not the works of the Highest. Search thine owne iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and

164 The following

much thou hast offended, and  
thine own indignities, in how  
weeks of the Highest Search  
mighty. How distant not the  
God, direct the work of thine

*Of the wonderfull effect of  
diuine grace.*

CHAPT. V.

**I** Praise thee, O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Iesus Christ, for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poore and wretched creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be vnto thee, who somtimes with thy comfort refreshest me, vnworthy of all comfort. I euer blesse & glorify thee with thy only begotten Sonne, and the holy Ghost for all worlds. O God my Lord, the holy loue of my soule, when thou shalt come into my hart, all that is within me will reioyce. Thou art my glorie, and the exultation of my hart. Thou art my hope, and my refuge in the day of my tribulation.

L 3

2, But



2. But for that I am yet weak in loue, and imperfect in vertue, I haue need to be comforted by thee: visit me therefore often, and instruct me with thy holy discipline. Deliuer me from euill passions, and heale my hart of all inordinate affections: that beinge cured within, and well purged, I may be made fit to loue, strong to suffer, and constant to perseuere.

3. Loue is a great matter, in very truth a great good, which alone maketh euery thinge that is heauy, light; and beareth equally, ynequall burthens. For it carrieth a burthē without a burthen, and maketh euery thinge that is bitter sweet, and delight-some. The noble loue of Iesus, enforceth man to worke great thinges, and styrreth him vp to desire allwaies the most perfect. Loue will be aloft, and not kept downe with any base thinges.

Loue

Loue will be free frō all world-  
lie affection, to the ende his in-  
ward sight be not obscured, that  
he be not intangled with the de-  
sire of any transitory gaine, or  
troubled with the want therof.  
Nthinge is sweeter then loue,  
nothing stronger, nothing, high-  
er, nothing more ample, no-  
thing more pleasāt, nothing ful-  
ler nor better in heauen or in  
earth: for that loue hath his be-  
ginning from God, & cannot rest  
but in God aboue all creatures.

4. He that loueth, flyeth, run-  
neth, and reioyceth; he is free &  
not held in. He giueth all for all,  
and hath all in all, for that he re-  
steth in one Highest aboue all,  
from which all good floweth &  
proceedeth. He respecteth not  
the guifts, but turneth himselte  
aboue all goods vnto the giuer.  
Loue oftentimes knoweth no  
measure, but inflameth aboue al  
measure. Loue feeleth no bur-

then, waigheth no paines, desisteth about its strength, complaineth not of impossibility, or that it thinketh all things lawful, and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, & performeth and bringeth many things to effect: whereas he that doth not loue, fainteth & can do nothing.

5. Loue alwaies watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not; being wearied, is not tyred: straitned, is not pressed: frightened, is not troubled: but like a liuely flame, and burning torch, breaketh vpwardes, and passeth through all with great security. If any one loueth, he knoweth what this voice crieth. A lowd cry in the eares of God, is the burninge loue of the soule, which saith: My God, my loue, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.

6. Enlarge me in loue, that my hart may tast how sweet it is to loue, and to be dissolued, and

swimming

swimme in thy loue. Let me be possessed by loue, mounting aboue my selfe, with excessive seruour, and admiration. Let me sing the song of loue, let me follow thee on high my beloued, let my soule faint in thy praises reioycing with loue. Let me loue thee more then my selfe, and not my selfe but for thee, and all in thee, that truly loue thee, as the law of loue commandeth which shineth in thee.

7. Loue is swift, sincere, pious, sweet and delightfull: stronge, patient, faithfull, prudent, suffering, full of courage, and neuer seeking it selfe. For where one seeketh himselfe, there he falleth from loue. Loue is circumspect, humble, and vpright: not remisse, not mutable, nor attending vnto vaine things: sober, chaste, constant, quiet, and guarded in all the senses. Loue is subject, and obedient to Superiours,  
meane

170 *The following*

meane and abiect to it selfe, deuout and thankfull vnto God, trustinge and hoping alwaies in him, euen then, when God imparteth no sweetnes vnto it: for without sorrow, none liueth in loue.

8. He that is not ready to suffer all thinges, and stand to the will of his beloued, is not worthy to be called a loue. A loue ought to imbrace willinglye, all that is harde and distastfull for his beloued; and not to turne away from him, for any contrarie accidents.

*Of the prooffe of a true Louer.*

CHAPT. VI.

**S**onne, thou art not yet a strong & prudent loue. Wherefore Lord? Because thou giuest ouer for a small aduersity, and too earnestly seekest comfort. A constant loue standeth firmly in  
temp-



temptations, and giueth not credit to the crafty persuasions of the enemy. As I please him in prosperiye, so I am not vnpleasant to him in aduersity.

2. A prudent louer, considereth not so much the giuft of his louer, as the loue of the giuer. He rather esteemeth the good will, then the value, and placeth all giufts vnder his beloued. A noble louer resteth not in the gift, but in me aboue any gift. All therefore is not lost if sometimes thou hast lesse tast of me and my Saints then thou wouldest. That good and sweete desire which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of present grace, and a certaine tast of the heauenlie Country: wheron thou must not rely too much, for it goeth and commeth. But to fight against euill motions of the mind which may happen vnto thee, and to despise the suggestion of  
the

the diuell, is a signe of vertue & great merit.

3. Let not therefore strange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatsoeuer, trouble thee. Retaine a firme purpose and an vpright intention to God. Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddainly rapt on high, and presently returnest againe vnto the accustomed vanities of thy hart. For thou dost rather vnwillinglye suffer them, then commit them: and as long as they displease thee, and thou striuest against them, it is a merit, and no losse.

4. Know that thy anciēt enemye, doth euer strive, to hinder thy desire to good, and to diuert thee from all deuout exercise: to wit, from the worshiping of Saints, from the deuout memorie of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sinnes, from the guard of thine owne hart,

hart, & frō the firme purpose of  
profiting in vertue. He thrusteth  
manye euill thoughtes into thy  
mind, that he may cause a wea-  
risomnes, and horreur in thee, to  
draw thee frō deuout prayer and  
reading. Hūble confession is dis-  
pleasing vnto him, & if he could,  
he would cause thee to cease frō  
receauing the Sacrament of my  
Body. Trust him not, nor care for  
him, although he should oftē set  
snares of deceit to intrap thee.  
Charge him with it, whē he sug-  
gesteth euil, & vnclean thoughts  
vnto thee. Say vnto him: Auane  
filthye spirit, blushe miserable  
wretch, thou art filthy that brin-  
gest such things vnto mine eares.  
Away from me wicked decca-  
uer, thou shalt haue no part in  
me: but Iesus shall be with me as  
a strong warriour, and thou shalt  
remaine confounded. I had rather  
die & vndergo any torment, thē  
to consent vnto thee. Hould thy  
peace

174 The following

peace & be silent, I wil hear thee  
no more, though thou shouldest  
worke me many troubles. My  
Lord is my light and saluation,  
Whom shall I feare? If whole ar-  
mies shoulde stand together a-  
gainst me, my hart shal not feare.  
Our Lord is my helper, and my  
Redeemer.

5. Fight like a good souldiar;  
& if thou somtimes fall through  
frailty, recouer greater forces the  
before, trustinge in my more a-  
boundant grace: and take great  
heede of vaine pleasinge of thy  
felfe, and pride. This brings ma-  
nie into error, and makes them  
somtimes fal into almost incur-  
able blindnes. Let the fall of the  
proud, foolishlye presuminge of  
themselves, serue thee for a  
warning, and a perpetuall hu-  
miliation.

That

*That grace is to be hid vnder  
the veile of Humility.*

CHAPT. VII.

Sonne, it is more profitable,  
and safe for thee to hide the  
grace of deuotion, nor to extoll  
thy selfe, nor to speake much,  
nor to esteeme much thereof:  
but rather to despise thy selfe,  
and feare it, as giuen to one vn-  
worthy thereof. This affection  
is not to be cleaued vnto, which  
may be quickly chāged into the  
contrary. Thinke when thou art  
in grace, how miserable and need-  
ie thou art wont to be without  
it. Neither doth therein only con-  
sist the profit of spirituall life,  
when thou hast the grace of cō-  
fort; but when thou humbly, re-  
signedly, and patiently sufferest  
the withdrawing therof: so that  
thou be not then lesse diligent  
in the exercise of prayer, nor suf-  
fer

homag a Kempis



fer thy selfe to passe ouer the rest  
of thy accustomed good works  
but that thou willingly performe  
what lieth in thee, accordinge as  
thou art able & vnderstandest to  
be fit: not neglectinge thy selfe  
wholy for the drinesse, and trou-  
ble of mind, which thou feelest.

2. There are many that when  
it succeedeth not well with the,  
presentlye they become impa-  
tient or slouthfull. The way of  
man is not alwaies in his power,  
but it belongeth to God, to giue,  
and to comfort when he will,  
how much he will, and whom  
he wil, as it shall please him, and  
no more. Some vnaduised per-  
sons haue ouerthrown themsel-  
ues for the greedy desire which  
they had of the grace of deuo-  
tion, attemptinge more then  
they were able to performe, not  
waighing the measure of their  
weakenes, but following rather  
the desire of their hart, then the  
judg-

judgment of reason. And because they presumed on greater matters then was pleasing to God, they quickly lost his grace. They were made needy, and left in a dejected estate that built themselves nests in heaven; to the end that being humbled, and impoverished, they may learne not to fly with their owne winges, but to liue in hope vnder my fathers. They that are yet new, and vnacquainted in the way of our Lord, vnles they gouerne themselves by the counsaile of discrete persons, may easily be deceaued and ouerthrowne.

3. And if they will rather follow their owne iudgment, then giue credit to others that are experienced, their ende will be dangerous, if they cannot be drawn frō their owne conceipt. Seldome those that are wise in their owne opinion, suffer themselves humbly to be gouerned by

M

others;

others. A little knowledge with humilitie, and a slender vnderstandinge, is better then greate treasures of learning with a vaine selfe-likinge. It is better for thee to haue lesse, then much of that wherof thou maist be proud. He doth not discreetlye, that wholye giueth himselfe ouer to mirth, forgetting his former povertie, & the chaste feare of God, which feareth to loose the grace which he hath obteyned. Nether is he vertuously wise, that in time of aduersity or any tribulation whatsoeuer, yeildeth to despairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me lesse confidently then he ought.

4. He that will be ouer secure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of warre too deiected and fearfull: If thou couldest alwaies continue humble, and lowly within thy selfe, and temper, and gouerne thy soule well,

3. Behould all is thine which I haue, and wherby I serue thee. And yet in very deed thou rather seruest me, then I thee. Behould heauen & earth, which thou hast created for the seruice of mā are ready at hand, and do daily performe whatsoeuer thou dost cōmād; & this is litle: yea thou hast also appointed the Angels to the seruice of man. But that which exceedeth all, is, that thou thy selfe hast vouchsafed to serue man, and promised to giue thy selfe vnto him.

4. What shall I giue thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serue thee all the dayes of my life! I would I were able at least for one day, to doe thee some worthy and acceptable seruice! Thou art truly worthy of all seruice, of all honour and euerlasting praise. Thou art my Lord, & I thy poore seruant, that am bound to serue thee with  
all

188      *The following*

all my forces, neither ought I  
euer to cease to praise thee. And  
this I wish to doe, this I desire:  
and whatsoeuer is wanting vnto  
me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to  
supply.

5. It is a great honour, a ve-  
rie great glory to serue thee, and  
to despise all thinges for thee.  
For great grace shall be giuen to  
them, that shal willingly subiect  
themselues vnto thy moste holy  
seruice. They shall receaue most  
sweet cōfort of the holy Ghost,  
that for thy loue shall renounce  
all carnall delightes. They shall  
attaine great freedome of mind,  
that for thy names sake shall en-  
ter into the narrow way, and  
shall haue left off all care of this  
world.

6. O sweete and delightfull  
seruitude of God, by which man  
is truly made free and holy! O sa-  
cred state of religious bondage,  
which maketh man equall to

Ad-



*That despising the World, it is  
Sweet to serue God.*

CHAPT. X.

**N**OW I will speake againe o  
Lord, & will not be silent.  
I wil say in the eares of my God,  
my Lord, and my Kinge that is  
on high: O how great is the mul-  
titude of thy sweetnes o Lord,  
which thou hast hidden for tho-  
se that feare thee! But what art  
thou to them that loue thee?  
What to them that serue thee  
with their whole hart? Truly  
vnspeakeable is the sweetnes of  
thy contemplation, which thou  
bestowest on thē that loue thee.  
In this chiefly thou hast shewed  
me the sweetnes of thy charity,  
for that when I was not, thou  
madest me. & whē I went astray  
far off from thee, thou brough-  
test me back againe, that I might  
serue thee: and hast commanded

me

me to loue thee.

2. O fountaine of euerlasting loue, what shall I say of thee? How can I forget thee, that hast vouchsafed to remēber me, euen when I withered away and perished! Thou hast vsed mercye with thy seruant beyond all the expectation of my hart: and hast bestowed thy grace and friendship beyond all merit. What shall I returne vnto thee for this grace? For it is not graunted to euery one to forsake all thinges, to renounce the world, and to vndertake a life of religion & perfection. Is it much that I serue thee, whō al creatures are bound to serue? It ought not to seeme much vnto me to serue thee: but this rather seemeth much, and meruailous vnto me, that thou vouchsafest to receaue into thy seruice one so poore and vnworthy, and to ioyne him with thy beloued seruants.

Wel, thou shouldest not so soon:  
fall into danger and offence. It  
is good counsel, that when thou  
conceauest seruour of spirit, thou  
shouldest thinke what will be-  
come of thee, when that light  
shall leaue thee. And when that  
doth happē, remember the light  
may returne againe, which for  
thy instruction and my glorie, I  
haue withdrawne for a time.

5. Such prooffe is often more  
profitable, then if thou shouldest  
alwaies enioy prosperitie accor-  
ding to thy desire. For merits are  
not to be waighed in a man by  
the number of visions and com-  
forte which he hath, or by his  
knowledge in Scriptures, or by  
his being placed in high degree:  
but in that he is grouded in true  
humility, and replenished with  
diuine charity: if he alwaies pu-  
rely and entirelye seeke the ho-  
nour of God, if he esteeme him-  
selfe nothing, and with a sincere

Hart despise himselfe, & reioyce more to be despised & humbled by others, then to be honoured.

*Of a meane conceipt of our selues in the sight of God.*

### CHAPT. VIII.

**S**hall I speake vnto my Lord, sith I am dust and ashes? If I esteeme better of my selfe, behold thou standest against me, & my iniquities beare true witness: neither can I speake against it. But if I abase and esteeme nothing of my selfe, and cast off all selfe conceipt, and (as I am) accompt my selfe to be dust, thy grace will be fauourable vnto me, and thy light will be neere vnto my hart: and all estimation how little soeuer, shalbe swallowed vp in the depth of my nothing, and perish euerlastingly. There thou shewest my selfe vnto me, what I am, what I haue byne

Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to diuels, and gratefull, and of great esteeme to all the faithfull: O seruice to be imbraced, & alwaies wished for, by which we obtaine the greatest good, and attaine to that ioy which neuer shall haue end!

*That the desires of our hart  
are to be examined and  
moderated.*

CHAPT. XI.

**S**onne, thou oughtest to learne many thinges more, which thou hast not yet well learned. What are those Lord? That thou frame thy desire wholye according to my pleasure: and be not a louer of thy selfe, but a diligent follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes do stir thee vp, and driue thee forwards with violence: but consider whether thou art  
moued



moued rather for my honour, then for thine owne profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoeuer I shall ordaine: but if there lurke in thee any selfe inclination, behoulde this is it that hindreth thee, and waygheth thee downe.

2. Beware therefore thou incline not too much vpon any desire that commeth to thy minde, before thou aske my counsaile: least perhaps afterwards it repēt thee, and that thou beginne now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestlye desiredst as the best. For euerye affection that seemeth good, is not presently to be followed: nor euery contrary affection, at the first to be fled. It is expedient sometimes to vse a restraint euen in good desires and endeauours, least by importunity thou iucur distraction of minde, and by euill example become a scan-

inclined inordinately to it selfe, and vnto creatures. For if in any thing thou seekest thy selfe, thou presently faintest and driest vp within thy selfe. Direct therefore all thinges chiefly vnto me, for I am he that haue giuen all. Consider euery thinge as flowinge from the highest good, and therefore all things are to be reduced vnto me as vnto their first beginninge.

2. Out of me, as out of liuing fountaines, the litle & the great, the poore and the rich, do draw the water of life : and they that willingly, and freely serue me, shall receaue grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in anye particuler good, shall not be grounded in true ioy, nor enlarged in his hart, but shal be many waies hindred & straitned. Thou oughtest therefore to ascribe no good vnto thy selfe, nor attribute the praise of

184      *The following*

vertue vnto any man, but giue all vnto God, without whom man hath nothing. I haue bestowed all, and will that all be returned to me againe: and with great severity I require thanks.

3. This is the truth, that putteth to flight vaine glory. And if heavenly grace, and true charitie enter in, there shall be no enuy nor grudging of hart, neyther shall there be any place for selfe loue. For diuine charity ouercommeth all, and enlargeth all the forces of the soule. If thou vnderstand aright, in me alone thou wilt reioyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praised aboue all thinges, and to be blessed in all.

*That*

byne, and whither I am come: for alas I am nothing: & I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behould I become nothing, and a masse of infirmity. But if thou suddainly looke vpon me, I am presently made stronge, and filled with new ioy. And it is a great meruaile, that I am so suddainly lifted vp, & so graciously imbraced by thee, that of mine owne waight, allwaies sinke downeward.

2. Thy loue is cause heereof, freely preuenting me, and relieving me in so many necessities, preseruinge me also from grievous dangers, and (as I may trulie say) deliueringe me from innumerable euills. For surely by euil louing my self, I lost my self: and by seeking thee alone, & sincerely louing thee, I haue found both my self & thee, and for thy loue haue more deeply brought my selfe to nothinge. For that

*The following*  
 thou, O most sweet Iesu, dealest  
 with me aboue all desert, and  
 aboue all that I dare hope and  
 request.

3. Blessed be thou my God;  
 for although I be vnworthye of  
 all good, yet the noblenes of thy  
 bounty & thy infinite goodnes,  
 neuer ceaseth to do good euen  
 to the vngratefull, and to them  
 that be turned away far frō thee.  
 Turne vs vnto thee O Lord that  
 we may be gratefull, humble, &  
 deuout: for thou art our safety,  
 our power, and our strength.

*That all thinges are to be re-  
 ferred vnto God as vnto  
 the last end.*

#### CHAPT. IX.

**S**onne I ought to be thy chie-  
 fest and last end, if thou de-  
 sire to be truly blessed. With  
 this intention thy affection shall  
 be purified, which is oftentimes  
 incli-



scandall vnto others: or beinge  
gain-said by others, thou be sud-  
dainly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou ough-  
test to vse violence, & resist man-  
fully thy sensual appetites, & res-  
pect not what thy body woulde,  
or would not: but rather to la-  
bour, that euen perforce it be  
subiect to the spirit. And it is to  
be chasticed so longe, and to be  
forced vnder seruitude, vntill it  
readilye obey in all thinges, and  
learne to be content with a litle,  
and to be pleased with ordinary  
things, and not to murmur a-  
gainst any inconuenience.

*Of the effect of Patience, and  
of strife against Concu-  
piscence.*

CHAPT. XII.

**L**Ord God, I perceauē patien-  
ce is very necessarye vnto  
me, for that many aduersities do  
happen

happen in this life. Howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without warre and affliction. So it is Sonne. And my will is not, that thou seeke after that peace which is voyd of temptatiōs, or that feelleth no contraryeties, but then thinke that thou hast found peace when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many aduersities.

2. If thou say that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire of Purgatory? Of two evils, the lesse is alwaies to be chosen. That thou maist therefore auoid euerlasting punishments in the next world, endeauour to suffer patiently for God, the present evils of this. Dost thou thinke that men of this world suffer little or nothing? Thou art deceived. Looke into the life euen of them that liue in greatest delicacies,

Heavens, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say they haue many delights, and follow their owne wils, & therefore they make small accompt of their tribulations. Be it so, that they haue whatsoeuer they will; but how long dost thou thinke it wil last?

3. Behould the wealth of this world vanish away like smoke, and there shal be no memory of their ioyes past. Yea euen while they liue also, they rest not in them without griefe, irk somnesse, and feare. For the selfe same thinge in which they take their delight, is oftentimes the cause of sorrow vnto them and much affliction. They haue their desert, who for that they immoderately seeke, and follow delights, they do not obtaine them, but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and deceitful, how inordinate, and filthy are those pleasures! Yea so senseles &

N

blind

194      *The following*

blind are men that they vnderstand it not: but like dūbe beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life, they incur the eternall death of their soule. Do not thou therefore, my Sonne, follow the disordinate inclinations of thy corrupt nature, but forsake thine owne will. Delight in our Lord, and he will giue thee the desires of thy hart.

5. If thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me, behould, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in the cutting off al base delights, shall be thy blessings, and abundant comforts shall be giuen thee. And how much the more thou withdrawest thy selfe from all comfort of creatures, so much the sweeter and more forcible cōsolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attaine vnto them without a certaine grieffe, labour, and strife.

The

The olde custome will make resistance, & thou must overcome it with another custome that is better. Thy flesh will murmur, but thou must bridle it with fervour of spirit. The olde serpent will sting and trouble thee, but by prayer he shal be put to flight: and with profitable labour thou shalt shut the dore against him.

*Of the humble obedience of a  
subiect according to the ex-  
ample of Christ.*

CHAPT. XIII.

**S**onne, he that endeaouureth to withdraw himselfe from obedience, withdraweth himselfe from grace. And he that seeketh to haue thinges in priuate, shall loose the common. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himselfe to his Superiour, it is a signe that his flesh is not yet perfectly obedient vnto him, but

N 2      officio



oftentimes rebelleth & murmur-  
eth against him. Learne there-  
fore readily to submit thy selfe  
to thy Superiour, if thou desirest  
to subdue thy passions. For the  
outward enemy is sooner ouer-  
come, if the inward man be in  
good estate. There is no worse  
enemy, nor more troublesome  
to the soule, then thou vnto thy  
selfe, not agreeing well with the  
spirit. Thou must of necessitye  
haue a true cōtempt of thy self,  
if thou wilt preuaile against flesh  
and bloud.

2. Because thou louest thy selfe  
as yet too inordinatly, therefore  
thou art afraide to resigne thy  
selfe wholly to the wil of others.  
But what greate matter is it, if  
thou that art dust, and nothing,  
submittest thy selfe to a man for  
God, when I the Almighty and  
highest Soueraigne, who crea-  
ted all things of nothing, hūbly  
submitted my self vnto man for  
thee?

thee? I became the most humble and abiect of all men, that thou mightest ouercome thy pride with my humility. Learne to obey thou that art dust. Learne to humble thy selfe thou earth and clay, and put thy selfe vnder the feet of all men. Learne to break thine owne will, and to yeilde thy selfe to all subiection.

3. Take courage against thy selfe, and suffer not pride to liue in thee: but humble and submit thy self to al, that euery one may goe ouer thee, and tread thee as dirt of the streets vnder their feete. Vaine mā, what canst thou complaine of? what canst thou answere foule sinner, to thē that reprocue thee, who hast so often offended God, & so many times deserued hell? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy soule was pretious in my sight: that thou mightest knowe my loue, and alwaies remaine grateful for

198      *The following*  
my benefits: that thou mightest  
continually giue thy selfe to true  
subiection and humilitie, and  
mightest heare patiently the con-  
tempt of thy selfe.

*Of the secret Iudgment of God  
to be considered, least we  
be extolled in our  
good deeds.*

#### CHAPT. XIV.

**T**How thundrest thy iudge-  
ments ouer me, o Lord, and  
shakest all my bones with feare  
and trembling: my soule is sore  
afraid. I stand astonished, & con-  
sider, for that the heauens are not  
pure in thy sight. If thou haste  
found wickednes in Angels, and  
hast not pardoned them, what  
shall become of me? Stars fell frō  
heauen, and what do I presume  
that am dust? They whose works  
seemed laudable, fell into the  
lowest;

lowest: and I haue seene them,  
that did eate bread of Angels, to  
be delighted with the huskes of  
swyne.

2. There is no sanctity, if thou  
O Lord, withdrawest thy hand.  
No wisdom auaileth, if thou  
ceapest to gouerne. No strength  
helpeth, if thou leauest to de-  
fend. No chastity secure, if thou  
doest not protect it. No custody  
of our owne profitable, if thy  
sacred watchfulnes be not pre-  
sent. For if thou leauest vs, we  
sinke, and perishe: but if thou  
vouchsafest to visit vs, we are rai-  
sed vp, and do enjoy life. We are  
inconstant, but by thee we are  
strengthened: we waxe cold, but  
by thee we receaue heate.

3. O how meanelly and basely  
ought I to thinke of my selfe!  
how little, yea nothing ought I  
to esteeme it, if I seeme to haue  
any good! O Lord, how ought I  
to submit my selfe vnder thy vn-

searchable Iudgments: where I find my selfe to be nothing els, but nothing, and nothing! O vnmeasurable waight! sea that can neuer be passed ouer, where I find my self only and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of glory? Wher is the confidence conceaued of vertue? Al vayne glory is swallowed vp in the depth of thy Iudgments, which hang ouer my head.

4. What is all flesh in thy sight? Shall clay glory against him that frameth it? How can he be lifted vp with vaine wordes, whose hart is truly subiect to God? All the world cannot mooue him to any elation of mind, whō truth hath subiected vnto it, neither shal he be moued with the tongues of al his praisers, that hath setled his whole hope in God. For they also that speak, behould, are nothinge: they shall passe away with the sound



found of the wordes: but the truth of our Lord remaineth for euer.

*What we ought to do, and  
say in euery thing which  
we desire.*

CHAPT. XV.

**S**onne, say thus in euery thing: Lord if it be pleasing vnto thee, let this be donne in this sort. Lord if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name. Lord if thou seest it expediēt for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then graūt vnto me, that I may vse this vnto thine honour. But if thou knowest it wil be hurtful vnto me, & not profitable to the health of my soule, take frō me al such desire. For euery desire, procedeth not from the holy Ghost, though it seeme vnto mā right & good. It is hard to iudg whether a good spirit, or the contrary, driue thee to desire  
this

this or that: or whether also by thine own spirit thou be moued therunto. Many are deceaued in the end, who at the first seemed to be lead by a good spirit.

2. Alwaies therefore, whatsoever occurreth vnto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired with the feare of God, and with humility of hart: and aboue al, thou oughtest to commit it vnto me with full resignation of thy selfe: and thou oughtest to say. Lord thou knowest what is best, do this, or that, as thou pleasest. Giue what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Do with me as thou knowest, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deale with me in al things according to thy will. I am in thy hand, turne me, and turne me againe which way soeuer thou please. Behoulde I am thy seruant, readye to obey thee

thee in all things: for I desire not to liue vnto my selfe, but vnto thee: and would to God it might be in some worthy and perfect manner.

*A prayer for the fulfilling of  
the Will of God.*

3. Graunt me thy grace sweet Iesus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and perseuer with me vntill the ende. Graunt me alwaies to desire and will, that which is most acceptable vnto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will euer follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine: and not to be able to will, or refuse any thing els, but what thou wilt, or reiectest.

4. Graunt that I may die to all things that are in the world, and to loue for thy sake to be contented. and not to be knowne in  
this

204. *The following*

this world. Graunt that aboue all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and make my hart to enjoy peace in thee. Thou art the true peace of the hart, thou art the only rest: out of thee all things are troublesome & vnquiet. In peace in the selfe same: that is, in thee, on chiefest eternal good, I will sleepe and rest. Amen.

*That true comfort is to be sought in God alone.*

CHAPT. XVI.

**W**Hatsoeuer I can desire, or imagine for my comfort, I looke not for it in this life, but heerafter. For if I should alone haue all the comfortes of the world, and might enjoy all the delights therof, it is certaine that they coulde not longe endure. Wherefore my soule, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor haue perfect delight, but in God, the  
com-

comforter of the poore, and the receauer of the humble. Expect a while my soule, expect the diuine promise, and thou shalt haue abundance of all good thinges in heauen. If thou desire inordinatly the things that are present, thou shalt loose the celestiall and eternall. Haue temporall thinges in vse, and the eternall in desire. Thou canst not be filled with any temporall goods, because thou art not created to enioy them.

2. Although thou enioyest all that is created, yet canst thou not be happy therby nor blessed, but in God that hath created all things, thy whole beatitude and happines consisteth: not such as is seene, and commended by the foolish louers of the world, but such as the good faithful seruants of Christ expect, and the spirituall, and cleane of hart, whose conuersation is in heauen, sometimes



times take a tast of. Vaine and short is all humā comfort. Blessed and true is the cōfort which is receaued inwardly from truth. A deuout mā euery where carrieth with him Iesus his comforter, and sayth vnto him: Be present with me, Lord Iesus, in euery place, and time. Let this be my comfort to be alwaies willing to want all human comfort. And if thy comfort be wāting, let thy will and iust prooffe be vnto me as the greatest comfort: for thou wilt not be angry alwaies, neither wilt thou threaten for euer.

*That all our care is to be  
placed in God.*

#### CHAP. XVII.

**S**onne, suffer me to do with thee what I please. I know what is expediēt for thee. Thou thinkest as man; thou iudgest in  
ma

many things as humane affectio  
perswaderh thee. Lord, what  
thou saiest is true. Thy solicitude  
for me is greater, then all the  
care that I can take for my selfe.  
For he stādeth at too great a ha-  
zard, that casteth not his whole  
care vpon thee. Lord, so that my  
will may remaine right & firme  
in thee, do with me whatsoeuer  
it shall please thee. For it cannot  
be but good, whatsoeuer thou  
doest with me.

2. If it be thy will I should  
be in darknes, be thou blessed;  
and if it be thy will I should be  
in light, be thou againe blessed.  
If thou vouchsafest to comfort  
me, be thou blessed: and if thou  
wilt afflict me, be thou also euer  
blessed. Sonne, so thou oughtest  
to be, as ready to suffer, as to re-  
ceauē ioy. Thou oughtest to be  
as willing to be poore and nee-  
dy, as plentiful and rich.

3. Lord, I will willingly suf-  
fer

209 *The following*

fer for thee, whatsoeuer thy pleasure is shal befall me. I will receaue indifferently from thy hand, good and euill, sweet, and sower, delightful and sorrowfull, and giue thee thanks for all that hapeneth vnto me. Keep me from all sinne, and I wil neither feare death, nor hell: so as thou dost not for euer cast me from thee, and blot me out of the booke of life, what tribulation soeuer befall me, shall not hurt me.

*That temporall miseries, by the example of Christ, are to be borne patiently.*

CHAPT. XVIII.

**S**onne, I descended frō Heauen for thy health: I tooke vpon me thy miseries, my charity and not any necessity drawing me thereunto, that thou mightest learne patience, & not refuse to beare tēporal miseries.

For

For from the houre of my birth,  
vntill my death on the Crosse, I  
was not without sufferinge of  
griefe. I suffered great want of  
temporall thinges: I often heard  
many complaints against me: I  
bare patiēty shame & reproches;  
for benefites receaued ingrati-  
tude; for miracles, blasphemies; for  
heauenly doctrine, reprehensiōs.

2. Lord, for that thou wert  
patient in thy lfe time, chiefly  
in fulfilling the commandment  
of thy Father, it is reason that I  
miserable sinner should haue pa-  
tience in all thinges accordinge  
to thy will, and for myne owne  
health, beare the burthen of this  
corruptible life, as long as thou  
wilt. For although this present  
life be burdensome, yet nor-  
withstandinge it is now by thy  
grace, made verie meritorious;  
and by thy example & the foot-  
steps of thy Saints, more plaine  
and tollerable to the weak. Yea,

O

much

much more comfortable also, then it was in times past in the old law, when the gate of heauen remained shur: and the way also to heauen seemed darker, when so few tooke care to seeke after thy Kingdome. Neither they also that then were iust, & were ordained to be saued, could enter into the heauenly glory before thy passion, and the debt of thy sacred death was discharged.

3. O how great thanks am I bound to giue thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to shew vnto me, and to all faithful soules a direct, and sure way to thy everlasting Kingdome! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we goe vnto thee that art our Crowne. If thou hadst not gone before vs and taught vs, who would haue taken care to follow? Alas how many would stay behind, and remaine far off, if they



*of Christ. Lib.III. 212*

they beheld not thy excellent examples! Behould we are yet colde although we haue heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy heauenly documents, what would become of vs, if we had not so greate light to follow thee?

*Of suffering of iniuries: and  
Who is proued to be  
truly patient.*

CHAPT. XIX.

**W**Hat is it thou sayst, Sonne? Cease to cōplaine, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance to the shedding of bloud. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of the that haue suffered so much, so strongly tempted, so grieuously afflicted, so many waies tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to minde the heauy

212. *The following*

sufferinges of others, that thou maist the easier beare the little aduersities which thou sufferest. And if they seeme not little, beware least thy impaience be cause therof. Yet whether they be little, endeauour to beare all patiently.

2. How much the better thou disposhest thy selfe to suffering, so much the more wisely thou dost, & so much the more doest thou merit: thou shalt more easily also endure it, if thy mind be prepared, and thy selfe accustomed therunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things of such a one, at the hands of such a person, nor such things are not to be suffered by me, for he hath done me great wronge and vpbraided me with those things which I neuer thought of: but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish, it considereth not the  
verue

verue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned, but rather waigheth the persons, and the iniuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whome he listeth. But he that is indeede patient, mindeth not by whome he is exercised whether by his Superiour, or some of his equals, or by his inferiour whether by a good and holy man, or by a peruerse and vnworthy person. But indifferentlye from all creatures, how much soeuer, or how often soeuer any aduersity happeneth vnto him, he taketh all thankfully as frō the hands of God, & esteemeth it a great gaine: for that nothing be for God, how little soeuer, so it be suffered for God, can be without merit.

4. Be thou therefore alwaies prepared for the fight, if thou wilt haue the victory. Without com-

but thou canst not attaine vnto  
the Crowne of patience. If thou  
wilt not suffer, thou refusest to  
be crowned. But if thou desirest  
to be crowned, fight manfully,  
and endure patiently. Without  
labour, there is no comming to  
rest: nor without fight, can the  
victory be obtained. Lord lett  
that be made possible to me by  
thy grace, which seemeth impo-  
ssible to me by nature. Thou  
knowest that I can suffer little,  
and that I am quickly dismayed,  
when a small aduersity ariseth.  
Let all exercise of tribulation be  
made pleasing vnto me, and be  
wellcome for thy name: for to  
suffer, and to be troubled for  
thee, is very profitable for my  
soule.

*Of the acknowledging of  
our owne infirmity:  
and of the miseries  
of this life.*

CHAPT. XX.

**I** will confesse against me my iniustice: I will confesse vnto thee O Lord my infirmity. Oftentimes it is a small matter that discomforteth, & grieueth me. I purpose to resist with courage, but when a small temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations doe proceed. And whilest I thinke my selfe somewhat safe, when I least expect it, I find my selfe sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behould therefore Lord, my humility & my frailty, euery way knowne vnto thee. Haue



mercy on me and deliuer me out of the mire of my infirmities, that I sticke not fast therein: let me not for euer remaine dejected. This is that which oftentimes beareth me backe, & confoundeth me in thy sight, for that I am so subiect to fall, & weake in resisting of my passions. And though I do not altogether consent, yet their continuall assaults are troublesome, and grieuous vnto me: and it is tedious, and a very irksome thing to liue thus daily in strife. Hereby my infirmity is made knowne vnto me: for that wicked fancies doe alwaies much more easily enter in vpon me, then they can be cast out againe.

3 O mighty God of Israel, the zealous louer of faithfull soules, let it please thee to consider the labour & sorrow of thy seruant, and assist him in all whatsoeuer he vndertaketh. Strengthen me  
with

with heauēly force, least my old man, my miserable flesh, not fullie as yet subiect to the spirit, preuaile and get the vpper hand: against which I ought to fight, as long as I breath in this miserable life. Alas, what a kinde of life is this, where tribulations and miseries are neuer wanting! where all is set with snares, and compassed with enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another commeth; yea and duringe the first conflict also, manye others come vlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be loued, that hath so many afflictions, and is subiect to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life, that begetteth so manye deaths, and plagues? And yet it is loued, & many seek to delight themselues therein. The worlde is oftentimes blamed, that it is deceiptfull and vaine, and yet it is

not

not easily forsaken, because the inclinations of our flesh do too much ouer-rule vs. Some things draw vs to loue it, others to cōtēne it. To the loue of the world do draw vs the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life: but the paines and miseries that do iustly follow them, causeth a hatred and loathsomnes therof.

5. But alas wicked pleasure ouercommeth the mind, which is giuen ouer to the world, and she esteemeth it a delight to be vnder thorns, because she hath neither seene nor tasted the sweetnesses of God, and the inward delight of vertue. But they that perfectly contemne the world, and endeavour to liue to God vnder holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the diuine sweetnesses, promised to the true forsakers of the world, and do more cleerlie see how grieuously the world erreth,

erretth, and how it is many waies  
deceaued.

*That we are to rest in God  
aboue all his gifts.*

CHAPT XXI.

**A**Boue all thinges, and in all  
things my soule, thou shalt  
euer rest in God, for he is the e-  
uerlasting rest of the Saints. Grā  
me most sweet and louing Iesu,  
to rest in thee aboue all creatu-  
res, aboue all health and beauty,  
aboue all glory and honour, a-  
boue all power and dignity, a-  
boue all knowledge & learning,  
aboue all riches and arts, aboue  
all ioy & gladnes, aboue al fame  
and praise, aboue all sweetnes  
and comfort, aboue all hope and  
promise, aboue all merit and de-  
sire, aboue all gifts and presents  
that thou canst giue and impart  
vnto vs, aboue all ioy and iubily  
that the mind of mā can receaue  
and

and feele: lastly aboue Angels & Archangels, & aboue all the heauenly Host, aboue all visible and inuisible thinges, and aboue all that, that thou art not, my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, surpassest all, thou alone most high, thou alone most powerfull, thou alone most full and sufficiēt, thou alone most sweet, & comfortable, thou alone most beautifull, & louing; thou alone most noble and glorious aboue al things: in whom al good thinges together both are perfectly, and euer haue beene and shalbe: and therefore it is too little and not sufficient, whatsoeuer thou bestowest on me besids thy self, or reuealest vnto me of thy self, or promisest, whilest thou art not seene, and not fully obtained: for surely my hart cannot rest, nor be fully contented vnlesse it rest in thee, and surmount all giftes and creatures whatsoeuer.



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3. O my most beloued spouse.  
Christ Iesus, the most chaste lou-  
er, the gouernour of all creatu-  
res, who will giue me winges of  
true liberty to fly, & rest in thee!  
O when shall it be fully granted  
me, to consider in quietnes of  
mind, & see how sweet thou art  
my Lord God! Whē shall I fully  
recollect my self in thee, that for  
thy loue I may not feele my self,  
but thee alone, aboue all sense,  
and feelinge, in a manner not  
knowne vnto all. But now I of-  
tentimes lament, & heare my in-  
felicity with grieve. For that ma-  
nie euils occur in this vale of mi-  
series, which do often trouble,  
griue, & darken me, often hin-  
der and distract me, allure and in-  
tāgle me, to the end I should not  
haue free access vnto thee, and  
that I should not enioy those sweet  
and heavenly imbracings which  
thou alwais giuest to the blessed  
& celestially spirits. Let my sighes  
and

222      *The following*  
and manifold desolatiō on earth  
mooue thee.

4. O Iesus , splendor of eternall glorie , and comfort of the pilgrime soule , with thee is my tongue without voice, and my silence speaketh vnto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come ! Let him come vnto me his poore seruant, & make me glad. Let him put out his hand , and deliuer me miserable wretche, from all anguish . Come, come blessed Lord, for without thee I shall haue no ioyfull day , nor houre. Thou art my ioy, & without thee, there is nothinge but want. A wretched creature, I am and in a manner imprisoned, and loaden with irons, vntill thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence , and giuest me liberty, and shewest a fauourable countenance vnto me.

5. Let others seeke what they please insteede of thee , but for  
me,

me, nothing els doth, nor shall  
delight me, but thou only my  
God, my hope, my euerlasting  
health. I will not hould my pea-  
ce, nor cease to pray, vntill thy  
grace returne againe, and thou  
speake inwardly vnto me. Be-  
hould I am here behould I come  
vnto thee, because thou hast cal-  
led vpon me. Thy teares, and the  
desire of thy soule, thy humility,  
& the cōtrition of thy hart, haue  
inclined, and brought me vnto  
thee. And I said: Lord I haue cal-  
led thee, and haue desired to en-  
ioy thee, being ready to forsake  
all things for thee. For thou first  
hast stirred me vp that I might  
seeke thee. Blessed be thou ther-  
for, o Lord, that hast shewed this  
goodnes to thy seruāt, according  
to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy seruāt more  
to say before thee, but that he  
doe greatly humble himselfe in  
thy sight, alwaies mindfull of his  
owne

224.     *The following*  
owne iniquity, and basenes?  
For there is none like vnto thee  
in all whatsoeuer is wonderfull,  
in heauen and earth. Thy words  
are good, thy iudgments true,  
and by thy prouidence al things  
are gouerned. Praise therefore &  
glory be vnto thee, O wisdom  
of the eternall Father.: let my  
tongue, my soule, & al creatures,  
together praise and blesse thee.

*Of the remēbrance of the ma-  
nifold benefits of God.*

CHAPT. XXII.

**O** Pen, O Lord my hart in  
thy Law, and teach me to  
walke in thy Commandements.  
Graunt me to vnderstand thy  
will, and to remember thy be-  
nefits, as well in generall, as in  
particuler, with great reuerence  
and diligent consideration: that  
hence forward I may be able  
worthily to giue thee thanks.  
But I know, and confesse, that I

am not able to giue thee due thanks, for the fauours which thou bestowest vpon me, euen in the least moment. I am lesse then the least of thy benefits: & when I cōsider the excellency of thy Maiesty, the greatnes therof maketh my spirit to faint.

2. Al that we haue in our soule & body, & whatsoever we possesse outwardly or inwardly, naturally or spiritually, are thy benefits, & do praise thee as bountiful, pious, and good, frō whom we haue receued al that is good. Although one haue receued more, another lesse, al notwithstanding are thine, and without thee euē the least cānot be had. He that hath receaued greater, cānot glory of his owne desert, nor extol himselfe aboue others: nor insule over the lesser, for he is greater & better that ascribeth least vnto himselfe, and is more humble and deuout in rendering  
E thanks.



226      *The following*

thanks. And he that esteemeth him selfe basest of all men, and iudgeth him selfe most vnworthy, is fittest to receaue greater blessings.

3. And he that hath receaued fewer, ought not to be sory, nor beare it impatientlye, nor enuy the that are enriched with greater store, but attend rather vnto thee, & chiefly praise thy goodnes, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifully, so freely, and so willingly, without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all thinges thou art to be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be giuen to euery one; and why this man hath lesse, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to determine, who dost waigh in iust measure the deserts of euery one.

4. Wherefore my Lord God, I esteeme it as a great benefit, not to haue much, whereby outward-

lic

to you: not as the world giueth,  
doe I giue to you. All doe desire  
peace, but all care not for those  
thinges that appertaine vnto  
true peace My peace is with the  
humble, and meeke of hart. Thy  
peace shall be in much patience.  
If thou wilt heare me and fol-  
low my voice, thou maist enioy  
much peace. What then shall I  
doe? In euery thing attend vnto  
thy selfe what thou doest, and  
what thou sayest: and direct thy  
whole intention vnto this, that  
thou maiest please me alone,  
and desire or seeke nothing out  
of me. Of the sayings & doings  
of others, iudge nothing rashly:  
neither doe thou intangle thy  
selfe with things not committed  
vnto thee: and doing thus, it  
may be thou shalt be little or  
seldome troubled.

2. But neuer to feeble any trou-  
ble at all, nor to suffer any griefe  
of hart or body, is not the state  
of

of this life, but of euerlastinge rest. Thinke not therfore, that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow, nor that then all is well, if thou haue no aduersary: nor that it is perfect, if all thinges be don according to thy desire. Neyther do thou then esteeme highly of thy self, or imagine thy selfe to be especially beloued, if thou be in great deuotion, and sweetnes, for in these things a true louer of vertue is not tried: neither doth the profit and perfection of man, consist in hauing them.

3. Wherin then Lord? In offering thy selfe from the very bottom of thy hart, vnto the diuine seruice, not seeking thine owne interest, or commodity, neither in great nor litle, neither in time nor eternity: so that with equall countenance, thou maist persist in thanksgiuing, both in prosperity & in aduersity, waigh-  
ing

*Of flying curious inquiry of  
the life of others.*

CHAPT. XXIII.

**S**onne, be not curious, trouble not thy selfe with idle cares. What is this or that to thee, whether that man be such or no, or whether this man do, or speake this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt giue accompt of thy selfe. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy selfe? Behould I know euery one what he is, and doe see all thinges that are vnder the sunne, and doe vnderstand howe it is with euery one, what he thinketh, what he would, and at what his intention aymeth. All things therefore are to be committed vnto me: but doe thou keepe thy selfe in good peace, & suffer the vnquiet

234      *The following*  
vnquiet to do as they wil. What  
soeuer they shall haue done, or  
sayd, shal fall vpon theselues, for  
they cannot deceaue me.

2. Desire not too great fame  
in this world, nor to be knowne  
to many, nor to haue the priuate  
loue of men: for these thinges  
breede distractions, and cause  
great darknes of hart. I would  
willingly vtter my wordes, and  
reueale my secrets vnto thee, if  
thou didest diligently obserue  
my comming, and didest open  
the dore of thy hart vnto me.  
Be carefull and watch in prayer,  
and humble thy selfe in all  
things.

*Wherin the firme peace of the  
hart, and true profit  
doth consist.*

CHAPT. XXV.  
**S**onne, I haue sayd: Peace I  
leauē to you, my peace I giue  
to



lie & before men I might seeme worthy of praise and glory: so that he, who considereth his owne pouerty & basenes, ought not therfore to conceaue griefe, or sorrow, or to be therfore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad for that thou, O God, hast chosen the poore and humble, and the despised of this world for thy selfe, and for thy familiar and domesticall friends. Witnesses are thy Apostles theselues, whom thou hast apointed princes ouer al the earth. And yet they liued without cōplaint in the world, so humble & simple, meane to the eyes of men, without all malice & deceit, that they reioyced to receue cōtumelies for thy name, & what the world abhorreth, they imbraced with great affection.

5. Norhing therfore ought so to reioyce him that loueth thee, & acknowledgeth thy benefits.

as the accomplishment of thy will in himselfe, and the pleasure of thy eternall appointment wherewith he ought to be so contented and cōforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest: & as peaceable & cōtent in the last, as in the first place: & as willingly to be despised & contēned, & to be of no esteeme or accompt, as to be preferred in honour before all others, and to be greater in the world. For thy will & the loue of thy glory, ought to be preferred before all things: & to cōfort him more, & please him better, thē all the benefits which he hath receaued or can desire.

*Of foure thinges that bring much peace.*

CHAPT. XXIII.

**S**onne, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true liberty.

ing all things with an equal balance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawne from thee, thou prepare thy hart to suffer greater matters, & not iustify thy selfe, as though thou oughtest not to suffer these, and so great afflictions, but iustify me in whatsoeuer I appoint, and praise my holy name; then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace: & thou shalt haue vndouted hope to see my face againe with great ioy. And if thou attaine to the full cōtempt of thy selfe, then shalt thou enioy as great aboundance of peace, as thy banishment may permit.

of

*Of the excellency of a free mind,  
Which humble prayer bet-  
ter deserueth then  
reading.*

### CHAPT. XXVI.

**I** Ord, it is the work of a perfect man, neuer to slack his mind from the attētiue thought of heavenly things, & as it were to passe without care, through many cares: not faintingly, but with a certaine priuiledge of a free mind, adheringe by inordinate affection to no creature.

2. I beseech thee most mercifull God, preserve me from the cares of this life: least I shoulde be too much intangled thereby: and from the many necessities of the body, least I shoulde be enthralled by pleasure: from al hindrances of the soule, least broken with troubles I should be deieced

*A Prayer for enlightening of  
the minde.*

4. Enlighten me, O good Ie-  
su, with the cleannes of inward  
light, and expell all darknes of  
my hart. Represse the many wa-  
uering thoughts, & beate down  
the fury of the temptations  
which violētly assault me Fight  
strongly for me, and vanquish  
the euill beasts, that is, the allu-  
ring concupiscences, that peace  
may be made in thy vertue, and  
abūdance of thy praise sound in  
thy holy court, which is a pure  
conscience. Cōmand the winds  
and tempests: say vnto the sea,  
Be still: and to the north wind,  
Blow not, and a great calme shal  
ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and  
thy truth, that they may shine  
vpon the earth, for I am empty  
and vnprofitable earth, vntill  
thou impartest thy light vnto  
P 4 me.



232      *The following*

me. Powre out thy grace from  
 aboue, wash my hart with hea-  
 uenly dew, giue waters of de-  
 uotion, to wash the face of the  
 earth, to bring forth good and  
 perfect fruit. Lift vp my mind,  
 overcharged with the waight  
 of sinne: draw vp my whole de-  
 sire to heauenly treasures, that  
 hauing tasted the sweetnes of  
 celestiaall happines, it may loath  
 to thinke of earthly vanities.

6. Take me violently to thee,  
 and deliuer me from al vnsta-  
 ble comfort of creatures: for no  
 created thing can fully quiet &  
 satisfy my desire. Ioyne me vnto  
 thee with an vnspeakable band  
 of loue: for thou only fillest the  
 mind of him that loues thee, &  
 without thee all things are di-  
 stastfull.

of

berty. Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou saist, for I shall be very glad to heare it. Endeauour my Sonne to do rather the will of another, then thine owne. Euer choose rather to haue lesse, then more. Alwaies seeke the lowest place, & to be inferior to euery one. Wish alwaies, & pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behould such a man entreth into the limits of peace and most quiet rest.

2. Lord, this thy short speach containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but ful in sense, and abundant in fruit. For if it could exactly be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feele my selfe vnquiet, and afflicted, I find that I haue straied from this doctrine. But thou that canst all things, & euer louest the good & profit of my soule, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfill thy

*The following*  
words and perfect mine owne  
health.

*A Prayer against euil  
thoughts.*

3. My Lord God. be not far  
from me: my God haue regard  
to help me, for sundry thoughts  
haue risen vp against me, and  
great feares afflicting my soule.  
How shall I passe through them  
without hurt? How shal I breake  
them? I, faith he, will go before  
thee, and will humble the glo-  
rious of the earth. I will open  
the doores of the prison, and re-  
ueale vnto thee hidden secrets.  
Do Lord as thou saiest, and lett  
all euil thoughts fly from before  
thy face. This is my hope, and  
my only comfort, to flye vnto  
thee in all tribulation, to trust  
in thee, to call vpon thee from  
my hart, and to expect patiently  
thy comfort.

*A Prayer*

ted and dimayed. I meane not from those things that worldly vanity so greatly desireth, but from those miseries, that as punishments, do weigh downe & hinder the soule of thy seruant, with the generall curse of mortality, that it cannot enter into liberty of spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the vnspeakable sweetnes, make bitter vnto me all carnall comfort, which may draw me away from the loue of euerlastinge happines, and wickedly allure me to it selfe, with the force of certaine present delight. Let not flesh and bloud overcome me, O Lord. Let not the worlde, and the shorr glory thereof deceaue me. Let not the Diuell and his subtile fraud, supplant me. Giue me force to resist, patience to suffer, and constancy to perseuere. Giue me instead of al cōforts of the world,  
the

240      *The following*

the most sweet vnction of thy spirit, and in lieu of carnal loue, powre into my soule the loue of thy name.

4. Behould, meate, drinke, cloathes, and other necessities for the maintenance of the body, are burdensome vnto a feruent spirit. Graunt me to affect such nourishments in due measure, & not to be intagled with an ouer great desire of them. It is not lawfull to renounce them wholly, for that nature is to be maintained: but to desire superfluityes, and those thinges that do rather delight, then sustayne, the law of God forbiddeth, for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein beseech thee, let thy hand gouerne me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

*That*



*That priuate loue most hind-  
reth from the chiefest good.*

CHAPT. XXVII.

**S**onne, thou oughtest to giue  
all for all, and to retaine no-  
thing of thy selfe. Know that the  
loue of thy selfe, doth hurt thee  
more, then any thinge in the  
world. According to the loue, &  
affection thou bearest them, so  
doth euerye thinge cleaue vnto  
thee more or lesse. If thy loue be  
pure, simple, and Well ordered,  
thou shalt be free from bōdage.  
Couet not that which thou mai-  
est not haue. Be not willinge to  
haue that, Which may hinder  
thee and depriue thee of inward  
liberty. Is a wonderfull thinge  
that thou cōmittest not thy selfe  
wholye vnto me, from the bot-  
tome of thy harr, with al things,  
that thou canst desire, or haue.

Q

2. Why

242 The following

2. Why doost thou consume thy self with a vaine grief? Why tyreth thou thy mind with needlesse cares? Resigne thy selfe to me, and thou shalt feele no losse at all. If thou seekest this or that, and wouldest be heere or there, to enioy thine owne commoditie and pleasure, thou shalt neuer be in quiet, nor free from trouble of minde: for in euerie thing, somewhat wil be wanting, and in euerie place there will be some that will crosse thee.

3. Not euerie externall thing therefore attained, and heaped together, helperth thee, but it rather auailerh, if thou despise it, and doest roote it out from thy hart, which thou must not vnderstand only of thy reuenues & wealth, but of the desire of honour also, and vaine praise; all which doe passe awaye with this fadinge world. The place auailerh little, if the spirit of seruour be wanting;

singe: neither shall that peace which is sought abroad long continue, if the state of thy hart be destitute of a true foundation: that is, vnlesse thou persist in me, thou maist change, but not better thy selfe. For when occasion doth happen, thou shalt finde that which thou soughtest to fly, and perhaps more.

*A prayer for cleāsing the hart,  
and obtaining of heauen-  
lie Wisedome.*

4. Confirme me O Lord with the grace of thy holy spirit. Giue me force to strengthen my inward man, and to purge my hart from all vnprofitable care, and grieve; not to be drawne away with sundry desires of any thing, either little or great: but to consider all thinges, how they are transitory, and do quicklie fade, and that my selfe doe also passe away together with the: for no-  
Q 2 thing

244.     *The following*  
thinge is permanent vnder the  
sunne, where all thinges are va-  
nity, and affliction of minde. O  
how wise is he that so conside-  
reth them!

5. Graunt me O Lord hea-  
uēly wisdomē, that I may learne  
aboue all thinges to seeke and  
finde thee, aboue all thinges to  
delight in thee, & to loue thee,  
and to thinke of all created thin-  
ges as they are, according to the  
disposition of thy wisdomē.  
Graunt me prudently to auoyde  
him that flatters me, and to suf-  
fer patiētly him that contradicts  
me. It is great wisdomē not to  
be moued with euerye blast of  
wordes: not to giue care to dan-  
gerous flattery: for so we shall  
go on securely in the way which  
we haue begun.

*Against*

*Against the tongue of Slanderers.*

CHAPT. XXVIII.

**S**onne, be not grieved if some thinke euill of thee, and speak that thou which thou dost not willingly heare. Thou oughtest to iudge the worst of thy selfe, and to thinke no man weaker then thy selfe. If thou walk according to the spirit, thou wilt not much esteeme of flying wordes. It is not small wisdom, to be silent in time of euill, and inwardly to turne to me, and not to be troubled with the iudgement of men.

2 Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men. For whether they iudge well or euill, thou art neuerthelesse alwayes the same. Where is true peace, and true glory? Is it not in me? And he that coueteth not to please men,



246      *The following*  
nor feareth to displease the, shall  
enjoy much peace. From inordi-  
nate loue and vaine feare, ariseth  
all disquiet of hart, and distrac-  
tion of the senses.

*How we ought to call vppon  
God, and blesse him when  
tribulation draweth  
neere.*

CHAPT. XXIX.

**B**lessed ( O Lord ) be thy  
name for euer, since it plea-  
seth thee, that this temptation  
and tribulation should fall vpon  
me, I cannot fly it, but haue need  
to flye to thee, that thou maist  
helpe me, and turne it to my  
good. Lord I am now afflicted,  
and it is not well with me, I am  
much troubled with this present  
grief. And now, beloued Father,  
what shall I say? I am taken in  
narrow straites, saue me in this  
houre. Yea therefore I am fallen  
in

in this houre. that thou maist be glorified, when I shall be greatly humbled, and by thee deliuered. Let it please thee, Lord, to deliuer me: for poore wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither shall I go without thee? Graunt patience Lord, euen this tyme also. Helpe me my God, and then I wil not feare how much soeuer I be oppressed.

2. And now in this, what shall I say? Lord, thy will be done. I haue well deserued to be afflicted and grieued. Surely I ought to beare it: and I would to God I might beare it with patience, vntil the tempest be passed over, and it become calme. But thy omnipotent hand is able to take this temptation from me, and to assuage the violence therof, that I vtterly sinke not vnder it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done vnto me (my Mercy!) And how much the more hard it is to

Q 4

me,

248    *The following*  
me, so much the more easie is  
this change of thy mighty hand  
to thee.

*Of crauinge the diuine aide,  
and confidence of recoue-  
ring grace.*

CHAPT. XXX.

**S**onne, I am thy Lord, who  
doe vse to giue comfort in  
the day of tribulation. Come vn-  
to me when it is not well with  
thee. This is that which most of  
all hindreth heauenlye consolati-  
on, that thou art slow in tur-  
ning thy self vnto praier. For be-  
fore thou dost earnestlye com-  
mend thy selfe to me, thou see-  
kest many comforts, and deligh-  
test thy selfe in outward things.  
And hence it proceedeth that all  
doth little profit thee, vntill thou  
consider that I am he, that deli-  
uer those that trust in me: & that

ONE

out of me there is neither powerfull helpe, nor profitable counsell, nor remedy that can continue. But now thou hauing recovered breath after the tēpest, gather strēgth againe in the light of my mercies: for I am at hād faith our Lord, to repaire all, not only entirely, but also abundantly.

2. Is there any thinge hard to me? or am I like vnto him that promiseth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firme and constant. Take courage & be patient, comfort will be giuen thee in due time. Attend me, expect, I will come and cure thee. It is a temptation that vexeth thee & a vaine feare that affrighteth thee. What els doth the care for futur incertainties bring thee, but sorrow vpon sorrow? Sufficient for the day is the euill therof. It is a vaine & vnprofitable thing to be grieued, or to reioyce for future thinges, that perhaps will neuer happen.

happen.

3. But it is incident to man, to be deluded with such imaginations: and a signe of little courage to be so easily drawn away by the suggestion of the enemy. For he careth not so he delude, and deceaue thee, whether it be true or false which he proposeth: whether he ouerthrowe thee with the loue of present, or the feare of future thinges. Let not therefore thy hart be troubled, neither doe thou feare. Belieue in me, and put thy truste in my mercy. When thou thinkest thy selfe furdest off from me, oftentimes I am neereest vnto thee. When thou iudgeth that almost all is lost, then oftentimes greatest gaine of merit is at hand. All is not lost, whē any thing falleth out contrarye vnto thee. Thou must not iudge according to that which thou seelest for the present: nor giue thy selfe ouer to  
any



any griefe from whence soeuer  
it commeth, as though all hope  
of deliuey were quite gone.

4. Thinke not thy selfe wholly  
left, although for a time I haue  
sent thee some tribulation, or  
withdrawn thy desired comfort:  
for this is the way to the King-  
dome of heauen. And without  
doubt it is more expedient for  
thee, and the rest of my seruants,  
that yee be exercised with many  
aduersities, then that yee should  
haue all thinges accordinge to  
your desires. I know the secret  
thoughts of thy hart, and that it  
is very expedient for thy soules  
health, that thou be left some-  
times without tast and feeling of  
spirituall sweetnes, least perhaps  
thou shouldest be puffed vp with  
good successe, & shouldest please  
thy selfe in that, which thou art  
not. That which I haue giuen, I  
can take away, and restore it a-  
gaine when I please.

5. When

252      *The following*

5. When I giue it, it is mine: when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine: for mine is euery good, and euery perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any crosse whatsoeuer, repine not, nor be not dismayed, I can quickly lift thee vp againe, and turne all thy sorrow into ioye. Neuerthelesse I am iust, & greatlie to be praised, when I doe all this vnto thee.

6. If thou be wise, and consider well thy case, thou wilt neuer yelde so cowardly to griefe, for any aduersitye that befallles thee, but rather reioyce and giue thanks: yea to accompt this thy only ioy, that afflicting thee with sorrowes, I doe not spare thee. As my Father hath loued me, I also loue you. said I vnto my beloued Disciples, whom certainlie I sent not to temporall ioyes, but to great conflicts: not to honours, but contempts: not to  
idlenes,

idlenes, but to labours: not to rest, but to bringe much fruit in patience. My Sonne remember these words.

*Of the contempt of all creatures, to find our Creatour.*

CHAPT. XXXI.

**L**ord, I stand yet in neede of great grace, if I must goe so far as that no mā or creature can hinder me. For as long as any thing houldeth me, I cannot fly freely vnto thee. He desired to fly with great liberty that said. Who will giue me winges like a doue, and I will fly and rest? What thing more quiet then a simple eye? And what more free, then he that desireth nothinge vpon earth? Man ought therefore to ascend aboue al creatures, and perfectly to forsake himselfe, and to remaine in excelsse of mind: &  
con-

consider that thou, who art the maker of all things, hast nothing amongst creaturs like vnto thee. And vnlesse a man be free from the affection of all creatures, he cannot with freedome of minde attend vnto diuine thinges. And for this cause there are so fewe contemplatiue men to be found, for that few can wholly sequester themselves from fadinge creatures.

2. Much grace is necessary to lift vp a soule, and to carry it aboue it selfe. And vnlesse a man be lifted vp in spirit, and deliuered from all creatures, and wholly vnited vnto God, whatsoeuer he knoweth, and whatsoeuer he hath, is of little accompt. Long shall he be little, and lie in earthlie basenes, that esteemeth any thinge great, but the one only vnmeasurable and eternall good. For whatsoeuer is not God is nothing, & ought to be accounted

as

as nothinge. There is great difference betweene the wisdom of a spirituall and deuout person, and the knowledge of a learned and studious Clerke. Far more noble is that learninge, which floweth from aboue, from the diuine influence, then that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man.

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavour not to exercise those things that are required therunto. It is a great hinderance, that we rest in signes and sensible things, and haue little true mortification. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are lead, nor what we pretēd, we that seeme to be called spirituall, that we take so much paines, and so great care for transitory & base things, and scarce or seldome thinke of our owne inward profit, with full collection of our senses.

4. Alas,



4. Alas. presently after a sleight recollection we break forth, and weigh not our wordes with diligent examination. We minde not where our affections lye, nor bewaile the impurity and many faults that are in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted her way, & therefore did that generall floud ensue. Sith our inward affectiō then is much corrupted, it must needes be that our action proceeding therof, be corrupted as a signe of the want of inward vigour. From a pure hart proceedeth the fruit of good life.

5. We aske how much one hath done: but how vertuous his actions are, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be stronge, rich, beautifull, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer: but how poore he is in spirit, how patient, and meeke, how deuout and spirituall, is seldome spoken

spoke of. Nature respecteth outward things, grace turneth herselfe to the inward vertues. That is often deceaued. this hath her trust in God, to the ende she be not deceaued.

*Of deniall of our selues, and  
forsaking all our affec-  
tions.*

CHAPT. XXXII.

**S**onne, thou canst not possesse perfect liberty, vnlesse thou wholly deny thy selfe. All such as be louers of themselves, are bound in fetters, they are couetous, curious, wanderers, seekers of ease, and not of those thinges that appertaine to Iesus Christ; but oftentimes deuisinge, and framing that which wil not continue. For all shall perishe, that proceedeth not from God. Keep this short and complete word. For sake all, & thou shalt finde all.

R

Leaue

258 *The following*

Leaue thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt finde rest. Consider this well, and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt vnderstand all.

2. Lord, this is not one daies worke, nor childrens sport: yea in this short sentence, al the perfection of Religious persons is included. Sonne, thou must not goe back, nor straight waies be deiected, when thou hearest the way of the perfect, but rather be stirred vp to more worthy and noble attempts, or at least to cōceaeue an earnest desire therof. I would it were so wel with thee, and thou wert come so far, that thou wert no longer a louer of thy selfe, but didst stand meerly at my back, and at his whom I haue appointed a Father ouer thee, then thou shouldest exceedingly please me, and all thy life would passe away in ioy and peace. Thou hast yet many things to

ges to forsake, which vnlesse thou wholly resigne ouer vnto me, thou shalt not attaine to that which thou desirest. I counsell thee to buy of me purified gould, that thou mayest become rich, that is, heauely wisdom, which treadeth vnderfoot all base and earthly things. Set little by the wisdom of this world, & esteeme not of the contentment of me, nor thine owne fancies.

3. I said that thou shouldest buy the meane and base things, with the precious, & those that were with men of great esteeme. For true heauenly wisdom seemeth very base, and of small accompt, and is scarce thought of by men: for that esteeme it not highly of it selfe, nor seeketh to be magnified vpon earth, which many praise from the teeth outward, but in their life they are far from it: yet is it the precious pearle which is hidden

260 *The following*  
*from many.*

*Of Inconstance of hart, and of*  
*directing our finall inten-*  
*tions vnto God.*

CHAPT. XXXIII.

**S**onne, trust not to affection:  
that which now is, wil qui-  
ckly change into another. As  
long as thou liuest, thou art sub-  
iect to mutability, euen against  
thy will: so that now thou art  
merry, now sad, now quiet, now  
troubled; now deuout, now di-  
stracted, now diligent, now idle;  
now heauy, now light. But he  
that is wise, and well instructed  
in spirit, remaineth alwaies one  
in the midst of these changes,  
not heeding what he seeketh in  
himselſe, or which way the  
wind of mutability bloweth: but  
that the whole intention of his  
mind, may tend as it ought, to  
the most perfect and best end.

For



For so he may continue one, and the selfe same, without any change in the midst of so many sundry chaunces, directing alwaies the sincere eie of his intention vnto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, so much the more cōstantly doth he passe through the variety of many cōtrary waues. But in many things the eye of a sincere intention waxeth blind, for it quickly looketh vpon some delight, some object that occureth. And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemish of seeking himselfe. So the Iewes in times past came into Bethania to Martha and Mary, not for Iesus alone, but to see Lazarus also. The eye of the intentiō therefore, is to be purged, that it may be sincere and pure, & to be directed vnto me, neglecting the multitude & variety of earthly objects.

*That God is sweete aboue all  
things, and in all things to  
him that loueth.*

CHAPT. XXXIV.

**B**E should my God, and all things! What would I haue more, & what can I desire more happy? O sweet and comforttable worde! but to him that loueth the word, not the world, nor those things that are in the world. My God, and all things! Inough is said to him that vnderstandeth: and it is pleasant to him that loueth, to repeat often. For when thou art present, all things do yield delight. but when thou art absent, all becomes irksome. Thou giuest quiet of hart and much peace, and pleasant ioy. Thou makest men thinke well of all, and praise thee in all things: neither can any thing please vs long without thee: but  
if

if it be pleasant and delightfom,  
thy grace must be present, and  
it must be seasoned with the  
sweetnes of thy wisdom.

2. What can be distastfull  
vnto him, to whō thou art plea-  
sing? And whom thou delightest  
not, what can can be pleasant?  
But the wise of this world, and  
that haue their contentment in  
sensuall things, cannot attaine to  
thy wisdom, for in the world is  
much vanity, and in the flesh is  
death. But they that follow thee  
by the contempt of worldly  
things, and mortification of the  
flesh, are proued to be truely  
wise: for they are changed from  
vanity to truth, from flesh to  
spirit. To these God is sweet, &  
what good soeuer is found in  
creatures, they wholly referre  
vnto the praise of their Maker.  
Notwithstanding great, yea very  
great is the difference, between  
the sweetnes of the Creatour,

164      *The following*  
& of the creature, of eternity &  
of time, of vncreated and crea-  
ted light.

3. O euerlasting light, surpas-  
sing all created lights, cast forth  
the beames of thy brightnesse  
from aboue, and pierce the most  
inward corners of my hart: pu-  
rify, reioyce, clarify and quicken  
my spirit with all the powers  
thereof, that I may cleaue vnto  
thee with excesse of vnspeaka-  
ble ioy. O when wil that blessed  
and desired houre come, that I  
may be filled with thy presence,  
and thou maist be vnto me all, in  
all things? as long as this is not  
graunted me, I shall not haue ful  
nor perfect ioy, Alas! my old mā  
yet liueth in me, he is not wholly  
crucified, he is not perfectly  
dead, he doth yet couet strongly  
against the spirit, & moueth euil  
warrs, & suffereth not the King-  
dom of my soule to be in peace.

4. But thou that rulest the  
powers

powers of the sea, and asswagest  
the motion of the waues, rise  
and help me: dissipate the peo-  
ple that desire war, and destroy  
them in thy might, and let thy  
hand be glorified: for there is no  
hope nor refuge for me, but in  
thee, my Lord God.

*That there is no security from  
temptation in this life.*

CHAPT. XXXV.

**S**onne, there is no security in  
this life: as long as thou liuest  
thou shalt alwayes haue need of  
spirituall armour. Thou liuest a-  
mong enemies, and art assaulted  
on al sides: if therfore thou defe-  
dest not thy selfe on euery side  
with the shield of patience, thou  
canst not be long vnwounded.  
Moreouer if thou fixe not thy  
hart on me, with a sincere will  
to suffer all things for me, thou  
cāst not sustaine the heat of this  
battaile,



266      *The following*

battaile, nor get that victorious crowne, which they haue that are in glory. Thou oughtest therefore manfully to goe through all, and to vse a strong hand against whatsoeuer withstandeth thee. For to him that ouercometh is giuen Manna; and to the negligent is left much woe.

2. If thou seekest rest in this world, how wilt thou then attaine to euerlasting rest? Giue not thy selfe to much ease, but to much patience. Seeke true peace, not in earth, but in heauen; not in men, nor in any creature, but in God alone. Thou oughtest for the loue of God, willingly to vndergoe whatsoeuer labours, to endure whatsoeuer griefes, temptations, vexations, anxieties, necessities, infirmities, iniuries, detractions, reprehensions, humiliations, confusions, corrections, and contempts: these helps to the attaining

ning of vertue: these try a No-  
uice of Christ, these make a hea-  
uently crowne. I will giue an e-  
uerlasting reward for a short la-  
bour, and infinite glory for tran-  
sitery confusion.

3. Thinkest thou, that thou  
shalt alwaies haue spiritual con-  
solutions at will? My Saints had  
not so, but many afflictions, and  
sundry temptations, and many  
discomforts: all which they en-  
dured patiently, and trusted ra-  
ther in God, then in themselves:  
knowing that the sufferings of  
this time, are not cōdigne to the  
deseruing of future glory. Wilt  
thou haue that straight wayes,  
which many after teares, and  
great labours haue hardly obtai-  
ned? Expect the comming of thy  
Lord, do manfully, be of good  
courage: feare not, do not flye,  
but offer both body & soule for  
the glory of God. I will reward  
thee in most plentiful manner,  
and

*The following*  
and I wil be with thee in all thy  
tribulations.

*Against the vaine Iudgements of men.*

CHAPT. XXXVI.

**S**onne, fixe thy hart stedfastly  
on God, feare not the iudgments of men, when thy conscience giueh testimony of thy iustice & innocency. It is a good and a happy thing to suffer in that sort: neither will it be burdensome to an humble minde, nor to him that trusteth rather in God, then in himselfe. The most part of men are giuen to talke much, & therfor little care is to be had of their words: neither is it possible to satisfy all. Though the Apostile endeauoured to please all in our Lord, and made himselfe all vnto al, yet he little regarded that he was iudged by humane day.

2. He did for the edification  
and

and health of others as much as he could, & lay in him yet could he not hinder, but that he was sometimes iudged, and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, & defended himselfe with patience, & humility against euil tongues, & such as thought vanities and lyes, and spake what they listed: Yet sometimes notwithstanding he answered, least the weake might haue receaued scandal by his silence.

3. Who art thou, that fearest a mortall man? to day he is, and to morrow he is not seene. Feare God and the terror of men shall not trouble thee. What harme can the wordes or iniuries of any do thee? he rather hurterh himselfe then thee: neyther can he auoyd the iudgments of God, be he what he will. Haue thou God before thine eies, & cōtend not with complaining wordes.

And

And if for the present thou seemest to be trodden downe, and to suffer shame and confusion without desert, doe not repine, neither doe thou lessen thy crowne by thy impatience, but rather lift vp thine eyes to me in heauen. I am able to deliuer thee from shame and wrong, and to repay euery one according to their works.

*Of a full and pure resignation  
of our selues for the obtaining  
freedom of hart.*

CHAPT. XXXVII.

**S**onne, leaue thy selfe, and thou shalt finde me. Make choice of nothing, appropriate nothing to thy selfe, and thou shalt euer gaine. For greater grace shall alwaies be giue thee, when thou dost perfectly resign thy selfe, and not turne back to take thy selfe againe. Lord,  
how



how often shall I resigne my selfe? and wherein shall I forsake my selfe? Allwaies, and in euey thing, as wel in little as in great. I do except nothing, but doe require that thou be as it were naked and void of all things. Otherwise, how canst thou be perfectly mine, and I thine, vnlesse both within and without, thou be free from all selfe will? And how much the sooner thou dost this, so much the better shalt thou finde thy selfe: and how much the more fully and sincerely thou doost it, so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much the more shalt thou gaine.

2. Some there are that resigne themselves, but with some exception; For they put not their whole trust in God, and therefore doe labour to prouide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed

assailed with temptations, doe  
returne againe that which they  
had left, and therefore they go  
no forwards in the way of ver-  
tue. These shal not attaine to the  
true liberty of a pure hart, nor  
to the grace of my diuine fami-  
liarity, vnlesse they first make an  
entiere resignation, and offer  
themselves a daily sacrifice vnto  
me. For without this can neuer  
be obtained the vnion with me,  
wherwith my Saints enioy me.

3. I haue often said vnto thee,  
and now againe I say the same:  
For sake thy selfe, resigne thy  
selfe, and thou shalt enioy inter-  
nall peace. Giue all for all, seeke  
nothing, require nothing, re-  
pose thy selfe purely and with  
a full confidence in me, and I wil  
giue my selfe vnto thee, & dark-  
nes shall not couer thee. Let this  
be thy whole endeaour, lett  
this be thy praier, let this be thy  
desir, that casting of al propriety.

thou

thou maist all naked follow thy naked Sauour Iesus: and dying to thy selfe, maist liue eternally to me. Then shal vaine fātasies, euil perturbations, and all superfluous cares fly away: then shall immoderate feare leaue thee, & inordinate loue shall dye.

*Of good gouernment in outward things: and of recourse to God in dangers.*

CHAPT XXXVIII.

Sonne, thou oughtest with al diligence to procure, that in euery place and action, or external businesse, thou be inwardly free, and maister of thy selfe, & that all hinges be vnder thy disposition, and thou not subiect to them; that thou maist be Lord and Maister of thy actions, not a seruant or a hireling, but rather a free mā, & a true Hebrew, belonging to the lot & freedome

S of

of the sonnes of God, who put the things that are present vnder their feet, and place their thoughts on that which is eternal: who looke on transitory things with the left eye, & with the right, doe behould the thinges of heauen: who suffer not themselves to be drawne to cleaue vnto them, but rather dispose and vse them, as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creatour of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remayne firme and stedfast in all euents, and doest not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnall eye, the thinges which thou seest & hearest, but presently in euery occasion doost enter with Moses into the Tabernacle to aske counsell of our Lord, thou shalt sometimes heare the diuine & celestiall oracle, and shalt returne  
instru-

thee. The loue of thy friende ought to rest in me, and for me is he to be beloued, whosoever he be, whom thou thinkest well of, and is verily deare vnto thee in this life. No friendship can auaille, or continue without me; neither is the loue true and pure, which they haue, whose hartes are not ioyned together by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloued friends, that (forasmuch as as appertaineth vnto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of men. Man approacheth so much the nearer vnto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all carnallie comfort: so much the higher also he ascendeth vnto God, by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how much the baser he in his owne conceipt.

2. But he that attributeth any good vnto himself, hindreth the  
com-



comminge of Gods grace into him. For the grace of the holy Ghost, euer seeketh an humble hart. If thou couldest perfectlye annihilate thy selfe, & purge thy selfe of all created loue, then should ther flow into thee great aboundance of my grace. When thou castest thy eyes on creatures, the sight of thy Creatour is taken from thee. Learne to overcome thy selfe in all things, for the loue of thy Creatour, & then shalt thou be able to attaine to heauenly knowledge. How little soeuer it be, if it be inordinately loued and regarded, it defileth the soule, and hindreth the enioying of the chiefeft good.

*Against vaine and secular  
Knowledge.*

CHAPT. XLIII.

**S**onne, let not the faire speeches and subtile sayinges of men

folly. O my truth, my mercy, my God, most Blessed Trinity, to thee alone be all praise, honour, vertue, & glory of all eternity.

*Of the contempt of all temporall Honours.*

CHAPT. XLI.

**S**onne, trouble not thy selfe, if thou seest others honoured and aduanced, and thy selfe contēned & debased. Lift vp thy hart vnto me in heauen, & the contēpt of men in earth wil not grieue thee. Lord, we are blind, & quickly seduced with vanity. If I looke well into my self, I can not say, that any creature hath done me wrōg, & therfor, I cannot iustly complaine of thee.

2. But because I haue often & grieuously sinned against thee, all creatures doe iustly take armes against me: for shame and cōtēpt is due vnto me, but vnto thee

thee praise, honour, and glorie.  
 And vnlesse I do so prepare my  
 selfe, that I be willing, and doe  
 reioyce to be despised and forsake-  
 nen of all creatures, and to be  
 esteemed nothinge at all, I can-  
 not obtaine internall strength  
 and peace, nor be spiritually en-  
 lighted, nor wholly vnited vnto  
 thee.

*That our peace is not to be pla-  
 ced in men.*

# CHAPT. XLII.

**S**onne, if the peace thou hast  
 with any, be grounded on  
 the opinion which thou hast of  
 him, or on the contentmēt thou  
 receauest in his company, thou  
 shalt euer be vnconstant & sub-  
 iect to disquiet: but if thou haue  
 recourse vnto the euer-living &  
 eternall Truth, a friend goinge  
 frō thee or dyinge shal not grieue  
 thee.

instructed of many things both present & to come. Moyſes had alwaies recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of al doubts & obscure queſtiōs, & fled to the help of prayer, for the remedy of the iniquity and dangers of mē. So oughtest thou in like māner to fly to the closet of thy hart, earnestly crauing the diuine fauour. For the Scripture testifieth, that therfore was Iosue and the childrē of Israel deceaued by the Gabaonites, because they consulted not first with God, but giuing too lightly credit to fayre wordes, were deluded with counterfaite piety.

*That a man be not over-ear-  
nest in his affaires.*

CHAPT. XXXIX.

**S**onne, alwaies commit thy  
cause to me, I will dispose  
well of it in due time: expect my  
S a ordi-

ordination, and thou shalt find it wil be for thy good. Lord, I doe most willingly commit all vnto thee, for my care can profit little. O that I cleaued not too much to future euent, but offered my selfe with all readinesse of minde to thy diuine pleasure!

2. Sonne, oftentimes a man doth earnestly labour for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another minde, and not to esteeme so much of it, as before he did: for mans affections doe not long continue fixed on one thing, but doe passe from one to another. It is therfore a matter, not of least moment, to forsake our selues euē in the least things.

3. The true spirituall profit of man, consisteth in denying & forsaking of himselfe: & he that is resigned, liueth in great freedom and security. But the ancient enemy, who alwaies laboureth



men moue thee, for the Kingdome of God consisteth not in wordes, but in vertue. Obserue well the words which I speake, for they inflame the hart, & enlighten the minde, induce compunction, and bring sundry comforts. Doe thou neuer reade to shew thy selfe learned or wise: but labour to mortify thy vices, for that wil profit thee more, then the knowledge of manye hard and difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt haue read and knowne many thinges, thou oughtest euer to returne to one beginning I am he, that teacheth man all knowledge: and doe giue to little ones a more cleare vnderstanding, then can be taught by man. He therefore, to whom, I speake, shall quickly be wise, and shall profit much in spirit. Woe be to them that inquire manye curious thinges of men, and doe little desire to knowe  
the

the way how to serue me. The time will come, when the Master shal appeare, Christ the Lord of Angells, to heare the lessons of all, that is, to examine the consciences of euerye one: and then he will search Hierusalem with a candle, and the hidden things of darkenesse shall be laid open, & the inuentions of tongues, shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant doe raise vp the humble minde, to vnderstand more reasons of the euerlastinge truth, then can be gotten by ten yeares study in scholes. I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without ambition of honour, without contention of arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise earthlye thinges, to loath things present, to seeke the euerlasting, to delight in the thinges that are eternall, to flye honours, to suffer scandalls, to  
place

countenance shall be no more changed, but my hart shalbe cōuerted, and rest in thee alone.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forsake all humane cōfort, eyther for the loue of deuotion, or for mine owne necessity, which inforceth me to seek after thee (for none els can comfort me) then might I wel hope in thy grace and reioyce in the gift of new consolation.

4. Thankes be vnto thee, from whence al proceedeth, as oftē as it goeth well with me: but I am meere vanity, and nothing before thee, an vnconstant and weake man. Wherof then can I glory? Or why doe I desire to be esteemed? Is it not of nothinge? And this is most vayne. Taulie vaine glory is an euil plague and veye greate vanitie: because it draweth from true glory & robbeth the soule of heauely grace. For whilst a mā pleaseth himself,

he displeaseth thee: whilst he gapeth after the praise of men, he is deprived of true vertue.

5. But true glory, & holy exultation, and ioy, is for a man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to reioyce in thy name, & not in his owne vertue, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praised be thy name, not mine: magnified be thy worke, not mine: let thy holy name be for euer blessed, but to me lett noe part of mens praises be giuen. Thou art my glory, thou art the ioy of my hart. In thee wil I glory & reioyce all the day; but for my selfe I wil not ioy, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the Iewes seeke the glory, which one man giueth to another: I will desire this, which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporall honour, all worldly highnesse, compared to thy eternall glory, is vanity and folly.

reth to withstand the seruants  
of God, omitteth at noe time  
his wonted temptatiōs, but day  
and night lieth still in waite, to  
cast the vnwary, if he can, into  
the snare of deceit. Watch  
therfore & pray, with our Lord,  
that you enter not into temp-  
tation.

*That man hath no good of  
himselſe, nor anythinge  
whereof he can glory.*

CHAPT. XL.

**I** Ord, what is man, that thou  
art mindfull of him, or the  
sonne of man, that thou vouch-  
safest to visit him? What hath  
mā deserued that thou shouldest  
giue him thy grace? Lord, what  
cause haue I to cōplaine, if thou  
forsake me? Or if thou doest  
not that which I desire, what  
can I iustly say against it? Surely,  
this I may truely thinke and say:



Lord I am nothing, I can do nothinge. I haue nothinge that is good of my selfe: but in all thinges I doe fayle, and am defective, and doe euer tend to nothinge: vnlesse thou helpe me, and doest interiorlye instruct me, I become cold, and am dissolved.

2. But thou, O Lord, art alwaies the same, and endurest for euer, alwaies good, iust, & holy, doing all things well, iustly, and holily, and disposing all things with wisdom. But I that am more inclined to fall, then to goe forwardes, doe neuer continue in one estate: for seauen different tymes are changed ouer me, yet doth it soone turne to the better, when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the fauour of man, and so strengthen me, that my

coun-

place al hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and aboue all things seruently to loue me.

4. For one by louinge me entirely, he learned diuine things, & spake wonders: he profited more in forsaking all thinges, then in studyinge subtilities. To some I speak ordinary things, to others, things more especiall: to some I appeare sweetlye by signes and figures, but to some I reueale mysteries with much light. The voice of bookes is one, but it teacheth not all men alike. For I am the internall teacher, I am the Truth, the searcher of the harte, the vnderstander of thoughtes, the setter forwardes of good works, distributing to euery one according to my will.

*Of not drawinge outwarde  
things to our selues.*

CHAPT. XLIII.

**S**onne, in many things thou  
soughtest to be ignorant, and  
esteeme thy selfe as dead vpon  
earth; and as one to whom the  
whole world is crucified. Thou  
must also passe ouer many thin-  
ges with a deafe eare, and rather  
thinke of that, which appertai-  
neth to thy peace. It is more pro-  
fitable to turne thine eyes from  
the sight of vnpleasing thinges,  
and to leaue vnto euery one his  
owne opinion, the to striue with  
contentious words. If thou stan-  
dest well with God, and confi-  
derest his iudgments, thou shalt  
the more easily yeild to the will  
of others.

2. O Lord, to what an estate  
are we come! Beholde, we be-  
waile

waile a temporall losse and for a little gaine we toile and spare no labour, and the spirituall damage of our soule is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind. That which litle or nothing profiteth, is alwaies remembred, & that which is chiefly necessarye, is negligentlye passed ouer, because mans nature carrieth him to external things, and vnlesse he quickly returne vnto himself, he lyeth drowned in them with delight.

*That credit is not to be giuen  
to all men: and how prone  
man is to offend in  
wordes.*

CHAPT XLV.

**H**Elpe me Lord, in my tribulation, for vaine is the defence of man. How often haue I bene deceaued, findinge want of faith, where I thought it sure:

T

And

And how often haue I found  
faith, where I least expected it.  
It is vaine therefore to trust in  
men, but the safety of the iust, O  
Lord, is in thee. Blessed be thou  
my God, in all things that be-  
fall vs. We are weake and incons-  
tant, quicklie deceaued, and  
soone changed.

2. Who is he, that is able so  
warilye to keepe himselfe, that  
he neuer fall into any deceit or  
doubt? But he that trusteth in  
thee O Lord, and seeketh with a  
pure hart, doth not easily fall,  
and if he fall into any tribulation,  
be he neuer so much inthrall'd,  
yet he shall quickly be deliuered  
or comforted by thee, for thou  
wilt not forsake him for euer,  
that trusteth in thee. The friend  
is rare to be found, that conti-  
nueth faithfull in his friends dis-  
tresse: but thou, O Lord, thou al-  
one art faithfull at all times, and  
there is none like vnto thee.



3. O how wise was that holy soule that said: My minde is firmlye settled, and grounded in Christ! If it were so with me, then woulde not humane feare so easily trouble me, nor wordes moue me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware before hand, of future euills? If things euen foreseene do oftentimes hurt vs, how can thinges vnlooked for, choose but wound vs grievously? But why did I not prouide better for my selfe, miserable wretch? Why also haue I so easily giuen credit to others? But alas we are men, and God knoweth, weak and fraile men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shal I giue credit Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the truth that neither doest deceaue, nor canst be deceaued. And on the other side, euery man is a liar, weake, yacconstant, and subiect

to fall, especially in wordes: and therefore we must not easily giue credit euen to that, which in outward shew, seemeth at the first a certaine ruth.

4 O with how great wisdom hast thou warned vs. to take heed of men! And because the enemies of man are his familiar and domesticall acquaintance, not to trust, if one should say: Behould heere, or behould there. I am taught to my cost, and I woulde to God I might thereby increase my care, and not my follye. Be wary, sayth one, be wary, keepe vnto thy selfe what I tell thee: and whilst I haue my peace, and thinke it is secret, he cannot keepe that secret, which he desired should be secret. but presently discloseth me and himselfe, and goeth his way. From such tales, and such improuident people, protect me Lord, that I fall not into their hands,

hands, nor euer commit such errors. Giue me grace my God to obserue truth, and constancy in my words, and remoue far from me a deceipfull tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all meanes to auoid.

5. O how good and quiet a thing it is to be silent, and not to talke of others, nor to belieue all that is said, nor easily to report what we haue heard; to lay ones selfe open to fewe; alwayes to seeke after thee, the behoulder of the hearts, not to be carried about with euery winde of wordes, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to thy wil and pleasure. Howe secure is it forth keeping of heauenly grace, to fly the sight of men? And not to seeke those things, that seem to cause admiratiō abroad, but to followe that with all diligence, which bringeth amend-

*The following*  
ment of life, and increase of fer-  
mour.

6. To how many hath vertue,  
knowne and ouer hastilye com-  
mended, beene hurtfull? How  
profitable hath grace been, kept  
with silence in this mortall life,  
which is nothing but a perpetual  
tentation, and a warfare?

*Of puttinge our trust in God,  
When euill words arise.*

#### CHAPT. XLVI.

**S**onne, be constant, and put  
thy trust in me. For what are  
wordes, but wordes? They passe  
through the ayre, but hurt not.  
If thou be guiltye, determine  
willingly to amend thy selfe: if  
thou be innocent, resolute to suf-  
fer this willingly, at least for  
God. It is a small matter to suffer  
sometimes a few words, if thou  
hast not yet the courage to en-  
dure stripes. And why doe small  
mat-

matters goe to thy hart, but for that thou art yet carnall, and regardest men more then thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, and therefore seekest shadowes of excuses.

2. But looke better into thy selfe and thou shalt see, that the world yet liueth in thee, and a vaine desire to please men. For when thou refushest to be humbled, & reprooued for thy faults, it is surely euident, that thou art neither truly humble, nor dead to the world, nor the world perfectly crucified to thee. But giue diligent care to my wordes, and thou shalt little respect ten thousand words spoken by men. Behould, if all should be spoken against thee, that coulde be most maliciously inuēred, what would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to passe, and madest no recko-



296 *The following*

ninge at all of it? Could all those wordes, plucke as much as one haire from thy head?

3. But he that hath not his heart within him., nor God before his eyes, is easlye moued with euery litle dispraise, when as he that trusteth in me, & considereth not in his own iudgment, shall be free from humane feares. For I am the Iudge and the discerners of all secrets. I know how the matter passed, I know him that offereth the iniury, and him that suffereth it. From me hath this word proceeded, this hath happened by my permissiō, that out of many hartts, thoughts may bereuealed. I shal iudge the guiltie and the innocent, but by secret iudgment I would beforehand try them both.

4. The testimony of men oftentimes deceaueth: my iudgment is alwaies true it shal stand, and not be overthrowne. It is

com.

commonly hidden and secret, & not knowne in euery thinge but to few: notwithstandinge it neuer erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eies of the foolish, it seemes not right. Men ought therefore to returne to me in euery iudgment, and not to stand in their owne opinions. For the iust man will not be troubled, whatsoeuer happeneth vnto him for God: and if any thinge be wrōgfully brought forth against him, he will not much care, neither will he vainely be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he, that searcheth the hart & reines, & do iudg. not according to the outward face, nor humane apparence. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the iudgement of men is commendable.

5. O Lord my God, the iust iudge, strong and patient, thou know-

298 *The following*

knowest the frailty and peruersty of man, be thou my strength, and all my trust, for mine owne conscience sufficeth me not. Thou knowest that which I cannot reach vnto, and therefore in euerye reprehension, I ought to haue submitted my selfe, and to haue borne it patiently: vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I haue fayled heerein, & giue me againe grace of greater sufferance. For thy bountifull mercy is more auaylable to me for the obtayning of pardon, then my conceaued iustice, for the defence of my hidden conscience. Although my conscience accuse me not, yet I cannot hereby iustifie my selfe; for if thy mercy be away, no man liuinge shalbe iustified in thy sight.

*That*

That all grievous thinges are  
to be endured for life ever-  
lasting.

CHAPT. XLVII.

**S**onne, let not the paines dis-  
may thee, which thou haste  
vndertaken for me, neither be  
thou discomforted for the tribu-  
lations which doe befall thee;  
but let my promise strengthen  
and comfort thee in all euent. I  
am able to reward thee aboue al  
measure. Thou shalt not longe  
toile here, nor alwais be oppres-  
sed with griefe. Attend a while,  
and thou shalt see a speedy end  
of thy euils. There will come an  
houre, when all labour and trou-  
ble shall cease. Little, and short, is  
all that passeth away with time.

2. Doe as thou doest, labour  
faithfully in my vineyard, I will  
be thy reward. Write, reade,  
sing.

sing, mourne, obserue silence,  
pray, suffer crosses manfully: life  
euerlasting is worthy of al these,  
and greater combats. Peace shall  
come in the day which is known  
vnto our Lord, and it shall not  
be day nor night, to wit, of this  
time, but euerlasting light, infi-  
nite brightnesse, tiedfast peace,  
and secure rest. Then thou shalt  
not say. Who shall deliuer me  
from the body of this death? nor  
cry. Woe be vnto me, for that  
my dwelling in a strange coun-  
trei is prolonged? For deare shall  
be throwne downe, and health  
shall be without decay, no an-  
xiety, blessed ioy, sweet and glo-  
rious company

3. O if thou hadst scene the  
euerlasting crowns of the Saints  
in heauen, and with how great  
glory they now reioyce, who in  
times past were contemptible to  
this world, & esteemed vnwor-  
thy of life it selfe, trulye thou  
wouldest



of Christ. Lib. III. 201

wouldest presently humble thy  
selfe euen vnto the earth: and  
wouldest rather seeke to be vnder  
the feete of all, then to haue  
command, so much as ouer one:  
neither wouldest thou desire pleasant  
dayes of this life, but rather  
reioyce to be afflicted for God, &  
esteem it thy greatest gaine to be  
reputed a nothing amongst men.

4 O if thou hadst a feeling of  
these things, & didst suffer them  
to enter into the depth of thy  
hart, how durst thou so much as  
once to complaine? Are not all  
paine ull labours to be endured  
for euerlasting life? It is no small  
matter to lesse or to gaine, the  
Kingedome of heauen. Lift vp  
thine eyes therefore vnto hea-  
uen: behould I, and all my Saints  
with me, who in this world had  
great conflicts, do now reioyce,  
now are comforted, now are secure,  
now do rest, & shal remain with  
me euerlastingly in the Kingdō  
of my

302      *The following*  
*my Father.*

*Of the euerlasting day, and  
shortnesse of this life.*

CHAPT. XLVIII.

**O** Most blessed mansion of  
the heauēly Cittry! O most  
cleare day of Eternitye, which  
night obscureth not, but the  
highest truth euer enlightneth:  
day euer pleasant, euer secure,  
and neuer changing into contra-  
rie state! O that, that day would  
once appeare, and all these tem-  
porall things were at an end! To  
the Saints it shineth glisteringe  
with euerlasting brightnesse, but  
to those that are Pilgrimes vpon  
earth, it appeareth only a far off,  
and as it were through a glasse.

2. The inhabitants of heauen,  
doe knowe, how ioyefull that  
day is: but the banished children  
of Eue bewaile the bitternes and  
tedious

of Christ. Lib. III. 303

tediousnes of this. The dayes of  
this life are short and euill, full  
of sorrow and anguish, where  
mā is defiled with many sinnes,  
incumbered with many passiōs,  
disquieted with many feares, fil-  
led with many cares, distracted  
with many curiosities, intangled  
with many vanities, compassed  
about with many errors, worne  
away with many labours, vexed  
with tēptations, weakned with  
delights, tormented with want.

3. O when shall these euils be  
at an end! When shall I be deli-  
uered from the miserable bon-  
dage of sin! When shall I thinke,  
O Lord of thee alone! When  
shall I perfectly reioyce in thee!  
When shall I be free from al im-  
pediments in true liberty, with-  
out all grieve of mind and body!  
When shall I haue firme peace,  
peace secure, and without trou-  
ble, peace within and without,  
peace euery way assured! O good  
Iesu

304 *The following*

Iesu, when shall I stand to behold thee! when shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdome! When wilt thou be vnto me all in all things! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdome, which thou hast prepared for thy beloued, from before all worldes! I am I for a poore and banished mā in the land of mine enemies, where there are daily warres, and great misfortunes.

4. Comfort my banishment, assuage my sorrowe: for my whole desire, tendereth vpp sighes vnto thee. For all is burdensome to me, whatsoever this world offereth for my comfort. I desire familiarlie to enjoy thee, but I cānot attaine vnto it. I would gladly fixe my harte to the thinges of heauen, but temporal cares and vnmortified passions weigh me downe, in mind I would be aboue all things, but to my flesh I am inforced to be  
subject

subiect against my will. Thus vn-  
happy mā that I ā I fight against  
my self, & ā become grievous to  
my self, whilst my spirit seeketh  
after the thinges that are aboue,  
& my flesh that which is below:

5. O what doe I inwardly suf-  
fer, when in mind I cōsider hea-  
uenly things, & presently in my  
prayers a multitude of fleshly fā-  
tasies, present themselves before  
me! My God; be not farre from  
me, depart not in thy wrath frō  
thy seruant. Cast forth thy light-  
ninge, and disperse them: send  
out thy darts, and breake all the  
fantasies of my enemy. Gather  
my senses together vnto thee:  
make me forget the thinges of  
this world: grant me grace to cast  
away speedilye, the fantasies of  
vices. Succour me, o euerlasting  
truth, that no vanity may mooue  
me. Come heavenly sweetnes-  
se, and let all impurity flye from  
thy face. Pardon me also, and



mercifully forgive me as often as I think vpon any thing els besides thee in praier. I truly confesse, that I am wont to be subiect to many distractions: for oftentimes I am not there, where I doe corporally stand, or sit, but rather there, whither my thoughts doe carry me. Where my thought is, there am I: there is oftentimes my thought, where my affection is. That quickly occurreth vnto me, which is naturally delightfome, and by custome pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art truth it selfe, hast plainly said. Where thy treasure is, there is also thy hart. If I loue heauen, I willingly thinke of heauenly things. If I loue the world, I reioyce at the felicity of the world, and grieue for the aduersity thereof. If I loue the flesh, I imagine oftentimes those thinges, that are pleasing to the  
flesh.

flesh. If I loue the spirit, I delight  
to think of spirituall things. For  
whatsoever I loue, thereof doe  
I willingly speake, and heare,  
and carry home with me the  
formes & representations ther-  
of. O blessed is that man, that  
for thee, o Lord, forsaketh all  
creatures, that violently resisteth  
nature, and out of the feruour  
of spirit, crucifieth the concupis-  
cences of the flesh: that with a  
cleare conscience, he may offer  
sincere prayers vnto thee, and  
be worthy of the company of  
the angelicall quiers, all earthly  
things, outwardly and inwardly  
being excluded.

Of the desire of eueralstinge  
life, & how great rewards  
are promised to those that  
fight valiantly.

# CHAPT. XLIX

**S**onne when thou perceauest  
the desire of eueralsting blis  
to be giuen thee from aboue,  
desirest to depart out of the Ta  
bernacle of this body, that thou  
maist without shaddow of any  
interchange behould my light  
open thy hart, and receaue this  
holy inspiration with thy whole  
desire. Giue great thanks to the  
heauenly goodnesse, that dea  
leth with thee so fauourably, vi  
sitteth thee mercifully, stirreth  
thee vp feruently, houldeth thee  
vpp powerfullie, least through  
thine owne weight, thou fall  
down to th vanities of the earth.  
Neither doest thou obtaine this  
by

of Christ. Lib. III. 309

by thine owne thought or endeauour but by the only fauour of heauenly grace & diuine bounty, that thou maist profit in vertue, and obtaine greater humility, and prepare thy self to future battailes, & endeauour to cleaue vnto me, with the whole affection of thy hart, & serue me with a feruent desire.

2. Sonne, fire often burneth, but the flame ascendeth not vp without smoke: so likewise the desires of some men are carnally carried to heauenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnall affections: and therefore it is not altogether purely for the honour of God, that which they so earnestly request of him. Such is also oftentimes thy desir, which with such importunity thou pressest vpon me. For that is not pure & perfect, which is infected and defiled with the loue of thine owne

310

*The following*

proper commodity and interest.

3. Aske not that which is  
delightsome and profitable to  
thee, but that which is gratefull  
to me, and appertaineth to my  
honour, for if thou iudget a-  
right, thou oughtest to preferre  
and follow my appointment,  
rather then thine owne desire,  
or any desired thing. I know thy  
desire, and haue heard thy often  
groanes. Now thou wouldest be  
in the freedome of the glory of  
the Sonnes of God: now doth  
the euerlasting habitation, and  
the heauenly Country full of  
ioy, delight thee, but this houre  
is not yet come: it is yet another  
time, to witt, of warre, time of  
labour and triall. Thou desirest  
to be filled with the chiefest  
good, but thou canst not attaine  
it for the present. I am he, saith  
our Lord, expect vntil the king-  
dome of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed  
vpon.



*of Christ. Lib. III. 317*

upon earth, and to be exercised in many things. Comfort shall be sometimes giuen thee, but abundant fulnes therof shall not be graunted. Take courage therefore, and be constant as wel in doing, as in suffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughtest to put on a new man, and to be changed into another. Thou must oftentimes doe that which thou wouldest not, and leaue vndone that thou wouldest doe. That which is pleasing to others, shall goe well forwards, that which thou wishest, shall not speed. That which others say, shall be nothing regarded. Others shall aske, and shall receaue, thou shalt aske and not obtaine.

5. Others shall be great in the praises of men, but of thee there shall be no speech, to others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accompted fit

for nothing. At this nature will sometimes repine, and it is much if thou endurest it with silence. In these and such like, a faithful servant of our Lord is wont to be tryed, how he can deny & ouercome himselfe in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou hast such need to mortify thy selfe, as in seeing & suffering those things that are contrary to thy will, especially when that is commanded, which seemeth vnto thee inconuenient, or to little purpose. And for that thou being placed vnder authority, darest not resist a higher power, therefore it seemeth hard vnto thee, to walke at the becke of another, & to leaue wholly thine owne opinion.

6. But consider, Sonne, the fruit of these labours, the end neere at hand, and the reward aboue all measure, & thou shalt receaue noe griefe thereby, but  
 greate

greate comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy will which now thou willingly forsakest, thou shalt alwaies haue thy will in heauen. There thou shalt haue al that thou wilt, or canst desire. there thou shalt enioy all good, without feare of loosing it: there shall thy will be euer one with me; it shall desire nothing, strange or priuate; there noe man shall withstand thee, no man complaine of thee, noe man hinder thee, nothing come against thee: but al things desired shal be there together present, & delight thy whole desire, & fulfill it to the highest degree: there I will giue thee glory, for the reproach which heere thou sufferdest; a garmēt of praise, for former griefe; for the lowest place, a seat of an eu. lasting Kingdō; there shall the fruite of obedience appeare, the labour of penance reioyce, and humble  
sub-

314      *The following*  
subiection shall be gloriouslye  
crowned.

7. Now therefore, bow thy  
selfe with great humility vnder  
the hands of all, and regard not  
who said, or commaunded this,  
but take great heed, that whe-  
ther thy Superiour, or thy Infe-  
riour, or thine equall, require a-  
ny thing of thee, or doe insi-  
nuate their desire, thou take it  
all in good part, and endeauour  
to fulfill it with a sincere inten-  
tion. Let one seek this, another  
that, let him glory in this, the  
other in that, and be praised a  
thousād thousād times, but doe  
thou neither reioyce in this,  
nor in that, but in the contempt  
of thy selfe, and in my pleasure  
and honour alone. This art thou  
to wish, that whether by life  
or death, God may be alwaies  
glorified in thee.

Now

*How a desolate person, ought  
to offer himselfe into the  
hands of God.*

CHAPT. L.

**L**Ord God, Holy Father, thy  
holy name be now and for  
euer blessed, because as thou  
wilt, so is it done, & what thou  
doest, is good. Let thy seruant  
reioyce in thee, not in himselfe,  
nor any thing els, for thou alone  
art the true gladnesse, thou art  
my hope and my crowne, thou  
art my ioy and my honour, o  
Lord. What hath thy seruant,  
but what he hath receaued from  
thee, euen without any desert  
of his? Thine is all that thou hast  
giuen, and whatsoeuer thou hast  
made. I am poore, and in labours  
from my youth: and sometimes  
my soule is heavy euen vnto  
teares, sometimes also it is trou-  
bled.



316 *The following*

bled in it selfe, by reason of passions which rise against her.

2. I desire th<sup>y</sup> ioy of peace, I craue the peace of thy children, that are fed by thee in the light of comfort. If thou giue peace, if thou infuse holy ioy, the soule of thy seruant shall be full of heauenly sweetnes, and shal become deuout in thy praise: but if thou withdraw thy selfe (as very often thou art wont) he will not be able to runne the waies of thy commandments, but rather he boweth his knees, and knocketh his breast, for that it is not with him, as it was yesterday, & the day before, when thy light shined vpon his head, & he was protected vnder the shaddow of thy winges, from the temptation which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, & cuer to be praysed, the houre is come, that thy seruant is to be proued!

proued! Behould Father, it is fit,  
that in this houre thy seruant  
suffer somerhing for thee. O Fa-  
ther worthy of eternall honour,  
the houre is come, which from  
a eternity thou didest foreknow  
should come: that for a short  
tyme thy seruāt shold outward-  
lye be oppressed, but inwardly  
liue for euer with thee: he should  
be a little despised, & humbled;  
and made as an abiect in the  
sight of men, and much afflicted  
with passions & infirmities, that  
he may rise againe with thee, in  
the rising of new light, and be  
clarified in heauen. Holy Father,  
thou hast so appointed it, and  
wilt haue it soe: and this is full-  
filled which thy selfe hast com-  
manded.

4 It is a grace and a fauour  
to thy friend to suffer, and to be  
afflicted in the world for the  
loue of thee, how often soeuer,  
& by whōsoeuer thou permittest

it to fall vpon him. Without thy counsell and prouidence, and without cause, nothing is done in earth. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast humbled me, that I may learne thy righteous iudgements, and cast away all haughtines of hart and presumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath couered my face, that I may rather seeke to thee for comfort, then to men. I haue learned also hereby, to dread thy inscrutable iudgement, that afflicteth the iust with the wicked, but not without equity and iustice.

15. I giue thee thanks, that thou hast not spared my sinnes, but hast worne me away by bitter stripes, inflictinge sorrowes, and sendinge griefs, within and without. There is none vnder heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Phisitian of soules, that  
strikeſt

strikeſt and healeſt, bringeſt in-  
to hell, and draweſt out againe:  
let thy correction be vpon me,  
and let thy rod inſtruct me.

6. Behould, beloued Father, I  
am in thy hands, I bow my ſelfe  
vnder the rod of thy correction;  
let my neck and ſhoulders, feele  
the ſtripes of thy chaſtiſement,  
that my crookedneſſe may be  
conformed to thy wil. Make me  
a deuout and humble diſciple of  
thine, as thou art wont well to  
doe, that I may be ready at eue-  
rie becke of thy diuine pleaſure.  
I commend my ſelfe & all mine  
vnto thee to be corrected. It is  
better to be rebuked heere, the  
hereafter. Thou knoweſt all and  
euerie thinge, and there is no-  
thing hidden in the conſcience  
of man, which can be hidden  
from thee. Before thinges are  
done, thou knoweſt that they  
will happen, and haſt no neede  
that any ſhould teach thee, or  
admo-

admonish thee of those things, which are done on earth. Thou knowest what is expedient for my good, and how much tribulation is fit for purging the rust of my sinns. Doe with me according to thy desired pleasure, & despise not my sinful life, better & more clearly known to none, then to thee alone.

7. Graunt me, Lord, to know that which is to be knowne, to loue that, which is to be beloved, to praise that, which pleaseth thee most: to esteeme that, which is precious vnto thee, to despise that, which is contemptible in thy sight: suffer me not, to iudge according to the sight of the exteriour eies, nor to giue sentence according to the hearing of the eares of ignorāt men; but to determine of visible & spiritual things with a true iudgmēt, & aboue all things euer to search after thy wil and pleasure.

8. The



8. The senses of men are often deceaued in their iudgmēts; the louers of the world, are also deceaued in louing only visible thinges. What is a man the better, for that he is esteemed great by man? The deceiptful man deceaueth the deceiptful, the vaine the vaine, the blind deceaueth the blind, & one feeble likewise another, whilst he exalteth and praiseth him. For how much euery one is in thy sight, so much he is, and noe more, saith humble S. Francis.

*That a man ought to imploy himselfe in workes of humilitie, when force is wanting for higher exercises.*

CHAPT. LI.

Sonne, thou art not able alwaies to cō inuincible seruēt desire of vertue, nor to persist

in the high pitch of contemplation, but thou must sometimes of necessity by reason of originall corruption, descend to inferior things, and beare the burthē of this corruptible life euen against thy will, and with ink-somnes. As thou carriest a mortal body, so thou shalt feele trouble and heauines of hart. Thou oughtest therefore in flesh, oftentimes to bewaile the burthē of flesh: for that thou canst not alwaies perseuere in spirituall exercises, and diuine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to fly to hūble & exterior works, and to refresh thy selfe with good & vertuous actions, to expect with a firme cōfidence my comming, and heauenly visitation, to beare patiently thy banishment, and the drinesse of thy mind, till thou bee visited againe by me, and deliuered from  
all an.

but grace walketh with great sincerity, & auoideth all shew of euill, pretendeth not deceipts, & doth all things purely for God, in whom also she finally resteth.

2. Nature will not willingly dye, nor be kept in, nor ouercome, nor be subiect to any, nor be subdued: but grace laboureth to mortify her self, resisteth sensuallity, seeketh to be subiect, is willing to be ouercome, and will not vse her owne liberty: she loveth to be kept vnder discipline, and desireth not to rule any, but alwaies to liue & remaine wholly subiect vnto God, & for God is ready humbly to bow vnto all men. Nature striueth for her owne commodity, and considereth what profit she may reape by another: but grace considereth not what is profitable and commodious vnto herselfe, but rather what is profitable to manie. Nature willingly receaueth  
ho-

honour and reuerence: but grace faithfully attributeth all honour and glory vnto God.

3. Nature feareth shame and contempt, but grace reioyceth to suffer reproach for the name of Iesus. Nature loueth idleness, and bodily rest, but grace cannot be idle, but willingly imbraceth labour. Nature seeketh to haue those things that be curious and precious, abhorreth that which is meane and base: but grace delighteth in plaine and humble things, despiseth not course and meane, nor refuseth to weare that which is old and torne. Nature respecteth the things of this world, reioyceth at earthly gain, sorroweth for losse, is moued with euery little iniurious word, but grace thinketh on that, which is euerslasting, and cleaueth not to that which fadeth with time; she is not troubled with losse, nor exasperated with  
iniu-

subiect in such sort, that his sensuality be subdued to reason, & reason in all things be obedient to me, he is truly a conquerour of himselfe, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou desire to moue vnto this height of perfection, thou must begin manfully, and set the axe to the root, that thou maist plucke vp & destroy thy hidden and inordinat inclination to thy selfe, and vnto all priuate and earthly good. Of this vice (that man too inordinatelye loueth himselfe) almost all dependeth. Whatsoever is wholly to be overcome: which being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillity. But for that few endeavour perfectly to dye vnto themselves, & to forsake themselves wholly, therefore they remaine intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted vp in spirit aboue themselves; but he that  
desi-



*The following*  
desireth to walke freelye with  
me, it is necessary that he mortifi-  
fie all his inordinate affections,  
& not adhere vnto any creature  
by priuate loue.

*Of the different motions of  
Nature, and Grace.*

CHAPT. LIV.

**S**onne, marke diligently the  
motions of thine owne na-  
ture, and my grace, for in very  
contrary and secret manner these  
are moued, and can hardlye be  
discerned, but by him that is spi-  
rituall & inwardly enlightened. All  
men desire that which is good,  
& pretend some good in al their  
words and deedes, and therefore  
vnder pretence of good, manye  
are deceaued. Nature is decepti-  
ful and seduceth, intangleth, and  
deceaueth many, and allwaies  
proposeth her selfe for her ende;  
but

of Christ. Lib.III. 313

anxiety. For, I will make thee forget thy former paines, & enjoy inward quietnes. I will lay open before thee, the pleasant fieldes of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged harte, thou maist begin to run the way of my commaundments. And thou shalt say, that the sufferings of this time are not condigne to the glory to come, that shall be reuealed in vs.

*That a man ought to esteeme himselfe vnworthye of comfort, and to haue deserued stripes.*

CHAPT. LII.

**I** Ord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spirituall visitation, and therefore thou dealest iustlye with me, when thou leauest me poore and desolate. For if I could shed teares like a sea, yet I were not  
V a worthy

324      *The following*

worthy of thy cōfort. For (alas) I deserue nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I haue grieuously and often offended thee, and sinned in many thinges. Al things therfore due-ly considered, I am not worthy euen of the least comfort. But thou mild & merciful God, who wilt not that thy workes doe perish, to shew the riches of thy goodnesse in the vessels of mercy, euen beyōd his desert, vouchsafest to comfort thy seruant aboue humane measure: for thy cōforts are not like to the vaine words of men.

2. What haue I done, o Lord, that thou shouldest impart any heavenly comfort vnto me? I remember not, that I haue euer done any good, but haue bene alwaies prone to sinne, and slouthful in my amendment. It is true, and I cannot deny it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldest stand  
against

iniuries, for that she hath placed her treasure and ioy in heauen, where nothing perisheth.

4. Nature is couetous, and doth more willingly receaue the giue, she loueth proper and priuate things; but grace is pittifull and liberall to all, auoydeth singularity, is content with a little, thinketh it happier to giue, then to receaue. Nature inclineth to creatures, yeildeth to her owne flesh, followeth vanities, and listneth to discourses: but grace draweth vnto God, and seeketh after vertues, renounceth creatures, flieth the world, hateth desires of the flesh, restraineth wandring abroad, blusheth to be seen in publike. Nature is willing to haue some outward cōfort, wher in she may delight her senses, but grace seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth aboue al visible things, in the highest good.

5. Nature worketh all for her owne

334      *The following*

owne gaine and profit, she can doe nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits: she hopeth to obtaine either that which is equall, or better, either praise or fauour, and coueteth to haue her workes & gifts much esteemed: but grace seeketh no temporall thinge, nor asketh any other reward for her desertes, then God alone, nor desireth more of temporal necessities, then what may serue her for the obtaining of euerlasting glory.

6. Nature reioyceth to haue many friendes, and kinsfolkes, she glorieth of Noble birth and descent, pleaseth the powerfull, fawneth vpon the rich, applaudeth those that are like herselfe: but grace loueth her enemies, and is not puffed vp with multitude of friendes, nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is ioyned with greater vertue, she rather fauoureth the poore, then  
the



*That the grace of God is not  
giuen to those that sauaour  
of earthly things.*

CHAP. LIII.

**S**onne, my grace is precious,  
it suffereth not it selfe to be  
mingled with externall things,  
nor earthly cōforts. Thou ough-  
test therfore to cast away al hin-  
derances of grace, if thou desire  
to receaue the infusion therof.  
Choose therfore a secret place  
to thy selfe, loue to liue alone  
with thy selfe, desire the con-  
uersation of none: but rather  
powre out deuout praiers vnto  
God, that thou maist keepe thy  
mind cōpunct, & thy cōscience  
pure. Esteeme the whole world  
as nothing: preferre my seruice  
before all outward thinges: for  
thou canst not attend vnto me,  
and be delighted also in transi-  
tory vanities. Thou oughtest

328 *The following*

to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance & friends, & to keep thy mind depriued of al tēporall cōfort. So the blessed Apostle Peter required, that the faithfull of Christ should keepe theselues as strangers & Pilgrims in this world.

2 O how greater a confidence shall he haue at the houre of death, whō noe affection to any earthly thing, detaineth in the world. But the weake minde is not yet capable of so retired a hart, neither doth the fleshly person, vnderstand the freedome of a recollected mind. Notwithstanding if he wil be truly spiri uall, he ought to renoūce as wel that which is farre off as that which is nere vnto him, & to beware of no mā more then of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy selfe, thou shalt with more ease subdue the rest. It is a glorious victory to triumph ouer our selues, For he that keepeth himself  
subject

against me, and there would be none to defend me. What haue I deserued for my sinnes, but hel and eu. lasting fire? I confesse in the truth of my hart, that I am worthy of all scorne and contempt, and it is vnfit that I should be remembered amongst thy deuout seruants. And although I be vnwilling to heare this, yet notwithstandinge for the loue of truth, I will lay open my sinnes against my selfe, that I may the better deserue to obtaine thy mercy.

3 What shall I say being guilty, and full of confusion? I can utter out of my mouth no other worde, but this; I haue sinned, Lord, I haue sinned, haue mercie on me: pardon me, suffer me a little, that I may bewaile my griefe, before I go vnto the land of darknes, & be couered with the shaddow of death. What doest thou require of a guilty  
V 3 and

and miserable sinner, but that he be contrite and sorrowfull, & doe humble himselfe for his offences? In true contrition and humblenes of harte, is bred a hope of forgiuenes; a troubled conscience is reconciled againe, grace lost is restored, man is defended from future wrath, and God & the penitent soule, meet together in the holy kisse of peace.

4. Hüble contritiō for sinns is an acceptable sacrifice vnto thee o Lord, saouring much sweeter in thy sight thē burning frankincēse. This is also the pleasānt ointmēt, which thou wouldest haue powred vpon thy sacred feet, for thou neuer despisest a cō:rite & hüble hart. There is a place of refuge frō the face of the wrath of our enemy: there is amēded, & washed away whatsoeuer yn-cleanes hath bin elswher gathered, and whatsoeuer is defiled.

*That*

the rich, hath more compassion of the innocent, then the powerfull, reioyceth in the simple, and respecteth not the deceptfull, exhorteth euer the good to labour for the better gifts, and by vertue to resemble the Sonne of God. Nature quickly complaineth of any want, and trouble: grace constantly suffereth al kind of need.

7. Nature turneth all thinges to her selfe, striueth and contendeth for her selfe: but grace reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed: she ascribeth no good to her selfe, neither doth she arrogantly presume of her selfe: she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others, but in euery sense and vnderstandinge, submitterh her selfe vnto the eternall wisdom, and to the diuine iudgement. Nature coueteth to know secrets, and to heare newes, she

Wi



336      *The following*

will appeare abroad, and make  
 proote of many things by the  
 experience of her own senses, she  
 desireth to be knowne, and to do  
 those things, for which she may  
 be praised and admired: but gra-  
 ce careth not for hearing newes,  
 nor to vnderstand curious mat-  
 ters, for that all this springeth  
 from the ancient disorder of our  
 corrupt nature, seeing nothinge  
 that is newe, is durable vpon  
 earth. She teacheth therefore to  
 restraine the senses, to auoid vai-  
 ne pleasing & ostentation, hum-  
 bly to hide those things that are  
 worthy of praise and admira-  
 tion, and of euery thing & euery  
 knowledge, to seeke profitable  
 fruite, and the praise and honour  
 of God: she will not haue herself  
 nor hers publickly praised, but  
 desireth that God should be blef-  
 sed in his giftes, who of meere  
 charity bestoweth all things.

3. This grace is a supernatural  
 light

light, and a certaine speciall gift  
of God, and the proper marke of  
the elect, and pledge of euerla-  
sting saluation, which listeth vp  
a man from earthly basenes, to  
loue things of heauen, and of a  
carnall, maketh him a spirituall  
person. How much the more  
therfore, nature is depressed &  
subdued, so much the greater  
grace is infused, and the inward  
man daily by new visitations,  
more perfected according to the  
Image of God.

*Of the corruption of Nature,  
& efficacy of diuine Grace.*

CHAPT. LV.

**M**Y God, who of thy mere  
goodnes hast created me  
to thy Image & likenesse, graunt  
me this grace which thou hast  
shewed to be so great, and soe  
necessary to saluatiō, that I may  
ouercome my wicked nature,  
Y which

which draweth me to sinne, & to the losse of my soule. For I feele in my flesh the law of sin, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captiue, to obey sensuality in many things: neither can I resist the passions thereof, vnlesse thy holy grace feruently infused into my hart, doe assist me.

2. Thy grace o Lord, & great grace is nedfull, that nature may be ouercome, which is euer prone to euill from her youth. For by Adam the first man, it falling and being corrupted by sinne, the penalty of this flaine hath descended vpon all mankind, in such sort, that nature it selfe which by thee was created good, & without defect, is now accompted for vice, and for the infinity of a corrupted nature, for that the motion thereof leste vnto it selfe, draweth to euill and abiekt things. For the little  
force

force which remaineth, is like a certaine sparke, lying hidden in ashes. This is naturall reason it self, compassed about with great darknesse, still retayning power to discerne good and euill, and the distance betweene true and false, although it be vnable to fulfill all, that it approueth: and enioyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the former integrity of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that according to my inward man, I delight in thy law, knowing thy commandements to be good, iust, and holy, reprobuing also all euill and sinne, and doe know that it is to be fled. But in my flesh I serue the law of sin, whilst I rather obey sensuality then reason. Hence it is, that I haue a will to doe good, but know not how to performe it. For this cause I oftē purpose many good things, but for that I want grace

340 *The following*

to help my infirmity, for a light resistance I go back, and faint. I know the way of perfection & see cleerly inough what I ought to doe, but pressed with the weight of mine owne corruption, I rise not vnto it.

4. O Lord, how needfull is thy grace for me, to begin any good worke, to go forward, and to accomplish it. For without it I can doe nothing, but in thee I cā do al things, when thy grace doth comfort me. O heavenly grace, without which our owne merits are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed! Arts riches, beauty, & strength, wit, or eloquence, are of noe worth with thee, o Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are cōmon to good and euill, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and loue, wherwith being marked, they are esteemed worthy of euerlasting life. This grace

loc



soe much excelleth, that neither the gifte of prophesye, nor the working of miracles, nor any speculation how high soeuer, is of any esteeme without it. Neither faith, nor hope, nor other vertues, are acceptable vnto thee without charity & grace.

5. O most blessed grace, that makest the poore in spirit, rich with vertues, and the rich in many blessings: humble in hart, come downe vnto me, replenish me in the morning with thy comfort, least my soule should faint with wearines, and wither away with drinesse of mind. I beseech thee Lord, that I may find grace in thy sight, for thy grace sufficeth, though other things that nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with manye tribulations, I will not feare euills, whilst thy grace is with me: she is my strength, she giueth aduise and helpe: she is

stronger then all enemies, and  
wiser then all the wise.

6. Thy grace is the mistresse  
of truth, the teacher of discipli-  
ne, the light of the hart, the so-  
lace in afflictio: she driueth away  
sorrow, she expelleth feare, she  
is the nurse of deuotion, the  
bringer forth of teares. What  
am I without it, but a rotten  
peece of wood, and an vnprofi-  
table stalke only meete for the  
fire? Let thy grace therfor, Lord,  
alwaies preuent me, & follow  
me, & make me euer diligent in  
good works, through Iesus Christ  
thy Sonne, Amen.

*That we ought to deny our  
selues, and imitate Christ,  
by the Crosse.*

CHAP. LVI.

**S**onne, loke how much thou  
scāst go out of thyself, so much  
maist thou eter into me. As to be  
void

voide of all desire of externall things, make th inward peace; for the forsaking of our selues, ioy neth vs internally to God. I will haue thee learne the perfect leauing of thy selfe vnto my will, without cōtradiction & cōplaint. Follow me, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Without the way there is no going, without truth ther is no knowledg, without life there is no liuing. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow, the truth which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way which cannot lead amisse, the truth which cannot erre, the life which cannot end. I am a most strait way, a supreme truth, a true life, a blessed life, an increased life. If thou remaine in me, thou shalt know the truth, and truth shall deliuer thee, and thou shalt apprehend euerglasting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life,

Y. A

keep

344      *The following*

Keep the commaundements: if thou wilt know the truth, be-  
lieue me. If thou wilt be perfect,  
sell all. If thou wilt be my disci-  
ple, deny thy selfe. If thou wilt  
possesse a blessed life, despise  
this present life. If thou wilt  
be exalted in heauen, humble  
thy selfe vpon earth. If thou wilt  
raigne with me, beare the crosse  
with me. For only the seruants  
of the crosse, finde the way of  
blisse and true light.

3. Lord Iesus, forasmuch as thy  
way is narrow, strait & cōtemp-  
tible vnto the world, graunt me  
grace to imitate thee in suffe-  
ring willingly all worldly con-  
tempt. For the seruant is not grea-  
ter thē his Lord, nor the Disci-  
ple aboue his Maister. Lett thy  
seruant be exercised in thy holy  
lif, for there is the health & the  
true sactity of my soule: whatso-  
euer I read or heare besids, doth  
not recreate or delight me fully.

4. Sonne,

4. Sonne, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou fulfill them. He that hath my commandements and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and I will loue him, and will manifest my selfe vnto him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdome of my Father. Lord Iesus, as thou hast said and promised, so giue me grace to deserve, that it be fulfilled. I haue receaued the Crosse, I haue receaued it from thy hande, and I will beare it, and beare it till death, as thou hast laid it vpon me. Truly the life of a good religious person, is the crosse, and it is a sure guide to heauen. It is now begunne, it is not lawfull to go back, neither is it fit to leaue that which I haue vndertaken.

5. Let vs then take courage my brethren, and go forwards together.



gether. Iesus will be with vs, for Iesus sake we haue vndertaken this crosse: for the loue of Iesus let vs perseuere in the crosse. He will be our helper, who is our guid & forerunner. Behould our King goeth before vs, who also will fight for vs: let vs follow him cheerfully, let vs not be dismaied, but be ready to dye with courage in the battaile, & let vs not blemish our glory, by flying from the Crosse.

*That a man be not too much  
deiected, when he falleth  
into some defect.*

CHAPT. LVII.

**S**onne, patience & humility in time of aduersity, are more pleasing to me, then much cōfort and deuotion in prosperity. Why art thou grieved for euery little trifle, spoken and done against thee? Although it  
had

had ben much more, thou oughtest not to haue bene moued. But now let it passe, it is not the first that hath happened, nor any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou liue long. Thou art cheerfull inough, as long as noe aduersity occureth. Thou canst giue good counsaile also, & canst strengthen others with thy words. but when any tribulation suddainly knocketh at thy doore, thou art destitute of counsell and voyd of force. See therefore thy greate frailty, which thou ofen prouest in euery small occasion. It is notwithstanding permitted for thy good, when these and such like occasions befall thee.

2 Put it out of thy hart the best thou canst, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deiest thee, nor trouble thee long: beare it at least patiently, if thou canst not ioyfully. Althoughe thou

thou be vnwillinge to heare it, and feelest in thy harre some motion of disdain. yet repress thy selfe, and suffer no inordinate word to passe out of thy mouth, which may be a scandal to the weake. The storme which now is raised, shall quickly be appeased, & inward griefe shall be assuaged by the returne of grace. I doe yet liue, saith our Lord, and am ready to helpe thee, and to giue thee greater comfort then before, if thou put thy trust in me, and callest deuoutly vpon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy selfe to greater suffering. All is not lost if thou feele thy selfe often afflicted, or grievously tempted. Thou art a mā, and not God: thou art flesh, not an Angel. How canst thou looke to continue euer in the same state of vertue, when an Angell in heauen hath fallen, and the  
first

first man in Paradise lost his standing? I am he that doe giue healthfull comfort to them that mourne, and doe raise vp vnto my Godhead, those that know their owne frailty.

4. Lord, blessed be thy sacred worde, more sweet vnto my mouth then the hony, and the hony combe. What should I doe in these my soe great tribulations & anguish, vnlesse thou didst comfort me with thy holy, sweet, and heavenly speeches? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at lēgth attaine to the heauen of blisse? Grant me a good end, graunt me a happy passage out of this world. Be mindfull of me, my God, and direct me the straight and ready way to thy euerlastinge Kingdome.

Amen.

of

Of not searching into high  
matters, & into the secret  
iudgments of God.

CHAPT. LVIII.

**S**onne, beware thou dispute  
not of high matters, nor of  
the secret iudgmēts of God why  
this man is forsaken, and he as-  
sumed to so great grace: why  
also this mā is so much afflicted,  
and he soe greatly aduanced.  
These things exceed all humane  
power, neither can any reason  
or discourse of any man search  
out the iudgment of God. Whē  
the enemy therefore suggesteth  
these things vnto thee, or some  
enuious people demād them of  
thee, answer that of the Pro-  
phet: Thou art iust, o Lord, and  
thy iudgment is right. And a-  
gaine: The iudgments of our  
Lord are true and iustified in  
themselves. My iudgments are



to be feared, not to be discussed, for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the vnderstanding of man.

2. In like manner I aduise thee not to inquire, nor dispute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier then the other, & which is greater in the Kingdome of heauen. These things oftentimes breed strife and vnprofitable cōtentions: they nourish also pride and vaine glory, from whence doe vsually spring enuy & dissensions, whilst one will needs foolishly haue this Saint preferred, & the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to noe purpose, but to displease the Saints, of whō they speak. For I am not the God of dissensio but of peace, which peace consisteth rather in true humility, then in exalting our selues.

3. Some are carried with zeale  
of

of affection, to loue these, or those most, but this loue is rather humane, then diuine. I haue made all the Saints, and haue giuen them grace: I haue made the partakers of my glory, I know the merits of euery one, I haue preuented them in the benedictions of my sweetnes. I foreknew my beloued, before the beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundry temptations, I haue sent them great inward comforts. I haue giuen the perseuerance. I haue crowned their patience.

4. I know the first and last: I embrace all with inestimable loue. I am to be praised in al my Saints: I am to be blessed aboue all things, and to be honoured in euery one, whom I haue thus gloriously exalted, and predestinated

nated without any precedent merits of their owne. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest, for that I made both the lesse & the greater. And he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdome of heauen. All are one by the band of Charity, they think the same, they wil the same, and are all knit together in one perfect band of loue.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they loue me more then themselues, and more then their owne merits. For being raiued about themselves, and drawne out of the affection of themselves, they tend wholly vnto the loue of me, in which also they rest, enioying me with vspeakable glory. Nothing can put them backe, nothing presse them downe; for being full of

Z

cuerla

354 *The following*

eueralstinge truth, they burne with the fire of vnquencheable charity. Let therefore carnall and earthly men, that can affect no other but priuate ioyes, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They adde and take away according to their owne fancies, not as it pleaseth the eueralstinge Truth.

6. There is in many great ignorance, specially in those that be slenderly enlightened, & these can seldome loue any with perfect spirituall loue. They are alwaies much drawne by a natural affection, and humane friendship to this man or to that, and according to the experience they haue of themselves in their earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance betweene the things, which the imperfect frame in their conceits, and those which  
illu.

illuminated persons do see by re-  
uelation from aboue.

7. Beware therefore, my Son-  
ne, that thou treat not curiously  
of these thinges, which exceed  
thy knowledg. but rather so ap-  
plye thy endeaoure, that thou  
maist at least haue the meanest  
place in the Kingedome of hea-  
uen. And if any one did knowe  
which of the Saints exceeded o-  
thers in Sanctity, or is esteemed  
great in the Kingedome of hea-  
uen, what would this knowledg  
auaile him, vnlesse he shoulde  
therebye humble himselfe the  
more in my sight, and stirre vp  
his mind to praise my name with  
greater seruour. His labour is  
much more acceptable vnto  
God, that thinketh of the great-  
nes of his sinnes, and his want of  
vertues, and how far off he is  
from the perfectiō of the Saints,  
then he that disputeth of their  
greatnes. It is better to pray to



the Saints with deuotion, and teares, & to craue their glorious suffrages with an humble mind, then to search their secrets with vaine curiosity.

8. They are well & right well contented, if men could content themselves, and refraine from these vaine discourses. They glorie not of their owne merits, for they ascribe no good vnto themselves, but attribut al to me, who of my infinite charity, haue bestowed my blessings vpon them. They are replenished with so great loue of my Godhead, and so superaboundant ioy, that there is no glory nor happines, that is, or can be waiting vnto them. All the Saintes, how much the higher they be in glory, so much the more humble they are in themselves and neerer and neerer vnto me. And therefore thou hast it written. That they did cast their Crownes before God,  
and

and fell downe vpon their faces  
before the Lambe, and adored  
him that liueh for euer,

9. Many inquire who is greater in the Kingedome of God, that knowe not whether they shall euer be numbred there amongst the least. It is no small matter to be euen the least in heauen, where all are great: for that all there shall be called, and shalbe indeed the sones of God. The least there shall be great among thousands, and the sinner of a hundred yeares shal die For when the Disciples asked who was the greater in the Kingdom of heauen, they receaved this answer, Vnlesse you be conuer- ted, & become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdome of heauen. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the Kingdome of heauen.

10. Woe be vnto them that

358      *The following*  
disdaine to humble themselves  
willinglye with little children,  
For the low gate of the Kinge-  
dome of heauen, will not giue  
them entrance. And woe be to  
the rich, that haue their com-  
forts heere, for whilst the poore  
enter into the Kingdom of God,  
they shall be wayting without.  
Reioyce you that be humble: &  
you that be poore, be you glad;  
for yours is the Kingedome of  
God, if you walke according vn-  
to truth.

*That all our hope and trust is  
to be fixed in God alone.*

#### CHAPT. LIX.

**L**ord, what trust haue I in  
this world? Or what is the  
greatest comfort, that all things  
vnder heauen do yeild me? Is it  
not thou, my Lord God, whose  
mercies are without number?  
Where

Where hath it bene well with me, without thee? Or whē could it be ill with me, whē thou wert present? I had rather be poore for thee, then rich without thee. I rather choose to be a Pilgrime in earth with thee, then to possesse heauē without thee. Where thou art, there is heaven: and there is death and hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it behoueth me to send forth deep sighes from my hart, and crie & pray vnto thee. For I haue none to trust vnto; none that can helpe me in time of necessity, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, and my trust, thou art my comforter, and most faithfull vnto me in all my distresses.

2. All men seeke their owne gaine. thou only seekest my sal-  
tion and my profit, and turnest  
all things to my good. Although  
thou permittest many tempta-

360      *The following*

tions to assault me, and manye aduersities to befall me, yet thou ordainest all this to my good and profit, who art wont to proue thy beloued seruants a thousand waies. In which proof thou oughtest no lesse to be loued and praised, then if thou diddest replenish me with heauenlie comforts.

3. In thee therefore, my Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: in thee I place my tribulation and anguish; for I finde all to be weak and vncoustant, whatsoeuer I behould out of thee. For neither can many friends auaille, nor forcible helpers aide, nor wise counsellours giue profitable answers, nor the booke of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliuer, nor any secret, or pleasant place defend, if thou thy selfe doest not assist, helpe, comfort, instructe, and keepe vs.

4. For



4. For all things that seeme to be ordayned for the rest and solace of man, when thou art absent, are nothinge, and do bring indeede no ioy, nor comfort at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the light of life, the depth of wisdom: and the most forcible comfort of thy seruants, is to trust in thee aboue all thinges. To thee therefore doe I lift vp myne eyes: In thee my God & the Father of mercies, I put my whole trust. Blesse and sanctify my soule with thy heauēly blessings, that it may be made thy holy habitation & the seat of thy eternall glory: & that nothing may be found in the temple of thy greatnes, that may offend the eyes of thy Maiesty. According to the greatnesse of thy goodnesse, and multitude of thy mercies, take pittie vpon me, and heare the praier of thy poor seruāt, who is farr exiled frō thee in  
the

*The following*  
the land of the shadow of death.  
Protect, and keepe the soule of  
thy seruant, amidst so many dan-  
gers of this corruptible life, and  
by the assistance of thy grace,  
direct it in the way of peace, to  
the country of euerlasting light,  
Amen.

*The end of the third  
Booke.*

OF

OF THE  
FOLLOWING  
OF CHRIST.

The fourth Booke.

*A deuout Exhortation vn-  
to the blessed Sa-  
crament*

The voyce of Christ.

**C**ome vnto me al yce  
that labour and are  
burdened, and I will  
refresh you, saith our  
Lord. The breade  
which I will giue, is my fleshe,  
for the life of the world. Take  
yee and eate, this is my body  
that shall be deliuered for you.  
Doe this for the commemoratiō  
of

364      *The following*  
of me. He that eateth my flesh,  
and drinketh my bloud, remain-  
neth in me, and I in him. The  
words which I haue spokē vnto  
you, are spirit and life.

*With how great reuerence  
Christ ought to be receaued.*

CHAPT. I.

**T**Hese are thy wordes O  
Christ, euerlasting Truth,  
though not spoken all at one ti-  
me, nor written in one and the  
selfe same place. Because there-  
fore they are thine and true, they  
are all thankefully and faithfully  
to be receaued by me. They are  
thine, & thou hast spoken them,  
and they are mine also, because  
thou hast spoken them for my  
saluation. I willingly receaue the  
from thy mouth, that they may  
be the deeper imprinted in my  
hart. These deuout wordes so  
full of sweetnesse and loue, doe  
firre

fire me vp, but mine owne offences doe amaze me, and my impure conscience driueth me backe from the receauing of soe great mysteries. The sweetnesse of thy wordes doth encourage me, but the multitude of my sinnes doe oppresse me.

2. Thou commaundest me to come confidently vnto thee, if I will haue part with thee: and to receaue the food of immortality, if I desire to obaine euerlasting life and glory. Come, sayst thou, vnto me, all yee that labour & are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and louely word in the eare of a sinner, that thou my Lord God shouldest inuite the poore and needy, to receaue thy most blessed body. But who am I Lord, that I may presume to approach vnto thee? behould the heauē cannot containe thee, and thou sayst: Come  
ye



366      *The following*  
yee all vnto me.

3. What meaneth this most  
pious benignity, and so louinge  
inuitation? How shall I dare to  
come, that know not any good  
in me, wherupō I may presume?  
How shall I bring thee into my  
house, that haue often offended  
thy most gracious countenance?  
The Angels and the Archangels  
honour thee, the Saints and iust  
men do feare thee; and thou saist.  
Come yee all vnto me. Vnlesse  
thou O Lord didest say it, who  
would belieue it to be true? And  
vnlesse thou didst commaund it,  
who woulde dare to come vnto  
thee. Behould Noah a iust man  
laboured a hundred yeares in the  
buildinge of the Arke, that he  
might be saued with a few: and  
howe can I in one houres spa-  
ce, prepare my selfe to receaue  
with reuerence the maker of the  
world?

4. Moyles thy great seruant,  
and

and especiall friend, made an Arke of incorruptible woode, which also he couered with most pure gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a rotten creature, how shall I so lightly dare to receaue the maker of the Law, and the giuer of life? Salomon the wisest of the Kings of Israel, bestowed seauen yeares in building a magnificent Temple, in praise of thy name, and celebrated the feast of the Dedication thereof eight daies together, he offered a thousand peaceable sacrifices, and set the Arke in place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets, and of ioy: and I the most vnhappy & poorest of men, how shall I bring thee into my house, that cā scarce spēd one halfe houre deuoutlie? and I would to God it were once almost one halfe houre, in worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they

they endeavour to please thee, and alas how little is that which I doe? How short time doe I spend, when I prepare my selfe to receaue? I am seldome wholly recollected. very seldome altogether free from distraction, and yet surely noe vndecent thought should occure in the presence of thy Deity, nor any creature draw me vnto it: for I am not to harbour an Angell, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference betwene the Arke and the Reliques therof, & thy most pure body with his vnspeakable vertues: betweene those legall sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all ancient Sacrifices. Why therefore doe I not become more feruent in thy ven- rable presēce? Wherefore doe I not prepare my selfe With greater care to receaue thy  
sacred

sacred gifts, such those holy ancient Patriarches, and Prophets, yea Kings also & Princes, with the whole people, haue shewed soe great zeale of deuotiō to thy diuine seruice?

7. The most deuout King Dauid, daunced before the Arke of God with all his force, calling to mind the benefits bestowed in times past vpon his Forefathers. He made Instruments of sundry kinds, he published Psalmes, and appointed the to be sung with ioy: himselfe also oftentimes played vpon the harpe. Being inspired with the grace of the holy Ghost, he taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole hart, and with pleasant voices, euery day to blesse & praise him. If so great deuotion was then vsed, & such memory of diuine praise before the Arke of the Testamēt, what reuerence and deuotion is now to be per-

formed by me, and all Christian people in the presence of this Sacrament, in receauinge the most precious body of Christ?

8. Many go to sundry places to visit the reliques of Saints, & are astonished when they heare of their miraculous works: they behould the spacious buildinges of their Churches, & kisse their sacred bones wrapped in silke & goulde. And behould thou art neere present with me on the altar, my God, the Holy of Holies, the maker of all things, and Lord of Angels. Oftentimes in those deuotions there is but curiosity of men, and noueltie of the beholders in the seeinge of such sights, and little fruit of amendment is gotten thereby, especially where there is so vnconstant wandring without true contrition. But heere in the Sacrament of the altar, thou art present, my Lord, God and Man,  
Christ



them to my euerlastinge health,  
which thou hast chieflye ordai-  
ned & instituted for thy honour,  
and perpetuall memory.

6. Reioyce my soule, and giue  
thanks vnto God for so noble a  
gift, and singular comfort left  
vnto thee in this vale of teares.  
For as often as thou callest to  
mind this mystery, and receauest  
the body of Christ: so often dost  
thou worke the work of thy re-  
demption, and art made partaker  
of al the merits of Christ. For he  
charity of Christ is neuer dimi-  
nished, and the greatnesse of his  
mercy is neuer lessened. There-  
fore thou oughtest alwaies to  
dispose thy selfe heereunto by a  
fresh renewing of thy mind, and  
to weigh with attentiuē consi-  
deratiō this great mystery of thy  
saluation. So great, new, & ioy-  
full it ought to seeme vnto thee,  
whē thou sayest, or hearest Mas-  
se, as if the same day Christ first  
desc-

descendinge into the wombe of the Virgin , were become man, or hanginge one the crosse, did suffer and dy for the saluation of mankind.

*That it is profitable to communicate often.*

### CHAPT. III.

**B**Ehold, O Lord, I come vn-  
to thee, that I may be cō-  
forted in thy gift, and be deligh-  
ted in thy holy banquet, which  
thou, O Lord, hast prepared in  
thy sweetnesse, for the poore.  
Behold in thee is al whatsoeuer  
I cā, or ought to desire: thou art  
my health, and my redemption,  
my hope, and my strength, my  
honour, and my glory. Make ioy-  
full therefore this day, the sou-  
le of thy seruant, for that I haue  
lifted it vp to thee my sweete  
cūs, I desire to receaue thee  
now

despise, and submit my self vnto thee, euen vnto the depth of my vnworthinesse.

3. Behould thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of sinners! behould thou bowest thy selfe downe vnto me, who am not worthy so much as to looke vp vnto thee! Behoulde thou comcest vnto me: it is thy will to be with me, thou inuitest me to thy banquet. Thou wilt giue me the food of heauen, & bread of Angels to eate, which is no other truely then thy selfe, the liuelye bread, that descendest from heauen, and giuest life vnto the world.

4. Behould from whence this loue proceedeth! what kinde of fauour and benignitye is this which shineth vpon vs! What thanks and praises are due vnto thee for these benefits! O how good & profitable was thy counsel, whē thou ordainedst it! How  
sweet

378 *The following*

sweet and pleasant the banquet,  
when thou gauest thy selfe to be  
our food! How wonderfully thy  
worke, o Lord how powerfull  
thy vertue, how vnspeakable thy  
truth! For thou saidst the word,  
and all thinges were made; and  
this was done which thou com-  
mandest.

5. A thinge of great admira-  
tion, and worthy of faith, and  
surpassing the vnderstanding of  
man, that thou, my Lord God,  
true God and Man, shouldest be  
wholy conteyned vnder a small  
forme of bread and wine, and  
shouldest be eaten by the recea-  
uer without beinge consumed.  
Thou who art the Lord of all  
thinges and standest in neede of  
none, hast pleased to dwell in vs  
by meanes of this thy Sacramēt:  
preserue my heart and body vn-  
spotted, that with a cheerful and  
pure conscience, I may often ce-  
lebrate thy mysteries, & receaue  
them

Christ Iesus, where also plenti-  
full fruit of euerlasting saluation  
is obtained, as often as thou art  
worthily, & deuoutly receaued.  
No leuity, no curiosity, or sen-  
suality draweth vnto this, but  
firme faith, deuout hope, and  
sincere charity.

9. O God the inuisible Crea-  
tour of the world, how wonder-  
fully doest thou deale with vs!  
how sweetly & graciously doe  
thou dispose of all thinges with  
thy elect, to whom thou offerest  
thy self to be receaued in the Sa-  
crament! O this exceedeth al vn-  
derstanding of man: this chiefly  
draweth the hart of the deuout,  
and inflameth their desire. For  
thy true faithfull seruantes that  
dispose their whole life to a-  
mendment, by this moste wor-  
thy Sacrament, oftentimes re-  
ceauē great grace of deuotion,  
and loue of vertue.

10. O admirable and hidden  
A a 2 grace



grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithfull of Christ doe know: but the vnfaithfull, and such as are slaues vnto sinne, cannot conceaue nor feele. In this Sacrament spirituall grace is giuen, and lost vertue is restored in the soule, and beauty disfigured by sinne, returneth againe. This grace is sometimes so great, that with the fulnesse of deuotion, which is here giuen, not only the mind, but the weake body also feeleth great increase of strenght.

11. Our coldnesse and negligence surely is much to be bewailed and pittied, that we are not drawne with greater affection to receaue Christ, in whom all the hope and merit of those that are to be saued doth consist. For he is our sanctification and redemption; he is the comfort of passengers, and the euerlasting fructiō of Saints. It is much therefore to be lamented, that many  
doe

now with deuotion, and reuerence. I doe long to bringe thee into my house, that with Zachheus I may deserue to be blessed by thee, and numbred amongst the childrē of Abraham. My soule thirsteth to receaue thy body, my hart desireth to be vnitēd with thee.

2 Giue thy selfe to me, and it sufficeth. For besides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor liue without thy visitation. And therefore I must often come vnto thee, and receaue thee as the only remedie of my health, least perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprivēd of thy heauenly food. For so, most mercifull Iesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people, and curing sundry diseases: I will not send them home fasting, least they faint in the way. Deale thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast  
vouch-

vouchsafed to leaue thy selfe in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithfull. For thou art the sweet refection of the soule and he that eateth thee worthilye, shall be partaker, and heire of euerlastinge glory. It is necessary for me, that doe so often fall & sinne, so quicklye wax dull and faint, that by often prayers and confession, and receauing of thy sacred body, I renew, cleanse, & inflame my selfe, least perhaps by long abstayninge, I fall from my holy purpose.

3. Forman is prone vnto euill from his youth, and vnlesse this diuine remedye helpe him, he quicklye slideth to worse. This holy Communiõ therfore draweth backe from euill, and comforteth in good. For if I be now so often slacke, and negligent when I communicate, or say Masse, what would become of me, if I receaued not this remedie,

the fountaine of life, needye to  
the Kinge of heauen, a seruant  
vnto my Lord, a creature to my  
Creator, desolate to my merci-  
full comforter. But whence is  
this to me that thou vouchsafest  
to come vnto me? Who am I  
that thou shouldest giue thy self  
vnto me? How dare a sinner pre-  
sume to appeare before thee?  
And thou, how dost thou vouch-  
safe to come vnto a sinner? Thou  
knowest thy seruant, and seest  
that he hath no good thinge in  
him, for which thou shouldest  
bestow this benefit vpon him. I  
confesse therfore my vnworthi-  
nesse, and I acknowledge thy  
goodnesse: I praise thy mercy, &  
giue thee thank for this thy vn-  
speakable charity. For thou doest  
this for thine owne goodnesse,  
not for any merits of mine, to  
the end that thy goodnesse may  
be better knowne vnto me, thy  
charity more aboundantly shew-

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ed, and thy humility more high-  
lic comended. Since therefore it  
is thy pleasure, and hast commā-  
ded that it should be so, this thy  
bounty is also pleasinge to me,  
and doe with that my offences  
may be no hinderance.

2. O most sweet and bounti-  
full Iesu, how great reuerence &  
thanks, with perpetuall praise is  
due vnto thee for the receauing  
of thy sacred body, whose worth  
& dignity no man is able to ex-  
presse! But what shal I thinke of  
at this time, now that I am to  
receaue this diuine Sacrament,  
and to approach vnto my Lord,  
to whom I am not able to giue  
due reuerence, and yet I desire to  
receaue him deuoutlye? What  
can I thinke better, & more pro-  
fitable, then to humble my selfe  
wholy before thee, and to exalt  
thy infinite goodnesse aboue  
me? I praise thee my God, and  
wil exalt thee for euer, and I doe  
desi-



doe so little consider this cōfortable mystery, which reioyceth heauen, & preserveth the whole world. O blindnes and hardnes of mans hart, that doth not more deeply weigh the greatnes of so vnspeakeable a gift, but rather comes by the daily vse therof, to regard it little or nothing.

12. For if this most holy Sacrament, should be celebrated in one place only, and consecrated by one only Priest in the world, with how great desire dost thou thinke, woulde men be affected to that place, and what esteeme would they haue of such a Priest of Almightye God, by whome they might enioy the consolation of these diuine mysteries? but now there are many Priests, and Christ is offered vp in many places, that so the grace and loue of God to man, may appeare so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is

*The following*  
common through the worlde,  
Thanks be vnto thee, good Iesu,  
euerlasting Pastour of our soules,  
that hast vouchsafed to refresh  
vs poore & banished men, with  
thy precious Body and Bloud,  
and to inuite vs to receauing of  
these mysteries with the wordes  
of thy owne mouth, sayinge:  
Come vnto me all yee that la-  
bour and are burdened, and I wil  
refresh you.

*That great goodnesse and cha-  
rity of God is bestowed  
vpon man in this Sa-  
crament.*

*The voice of the Disciple.*

CHAPT. II.

**P**Resuming of thy goodnesse  
and great mercy, o Lord,  
being sicke, I approach vnto my  
Saviour, hungry and thirstye to  
the

die, & sought not after so great a helpe? Though euery day I be not fit, nor well prepared to say Masse, I wil endeavour notwithstanding at conuenient times to receaue the diuine misteries, and make my self partaker of so great a grace. For this is the only chief comforte of a faithfull soule, whilst she wandereth from thee in this mortall body, that being mindfull of her God, she often receaue her Beloued with a deuout minde.

4. O wonderfull benignity of thy mercy towards vs, that thou, Lord God, the Creatour and giuer of life to all spirits, doost vouchsafe to come vnto a poore soule, and with thy Godhead & Humanity to replenish her hunger. O happy minde and blessed soule, that deserueth to receaue, her Lord God, with deuout affection, and in receauing of thee to be filled with spirituall ioy! O  
how

how great a Lord doth she entertaine! How beloued a ghest doth she harbour! how pleasant a companion doth she receaue! how faithfull a friend doth she accept! how beautifull and noble a spouse doth she imbrace! she imbraceth him who is to be loued aboue all that is beloued, and aboue all things that may be desired. Let heaven and earth and all their beauty, be silent in thy presence. For what beautye and praise soeuer they haue, it is receaued from thy bountie, and shall not equal the beautie of thy name, of whose wisdom there is no end.

**That**

*That manye benefits are bestowed vpon them that communicate deuoutly.*

**The voyce of the Disciple.**

**CHAPT III.**

**M**Y Lord God, preuent thy seruant in the blessings of thy sweetnes, that I may deserue to approach worthily and deuoutly to thy holy Sacramēt: stirre vp my hart vnto thee, and deliuer me from all heaumes & slouth; visit me with thy comfort: that I may tast in spirit thy sweetnesse, which plentifully lyeth hid in this Sacrament, as a fountaine. Giue light also to my eyes, to behold so great a mystery, & strengthen me to beleue it with vndoubted faith. For it is thy woorke, and not mans power, thy sacred institution, not mans inuention. For noe



man is of himselfe able to comprehend and vnderstand these thinges, which surpasse the vnderstanding euen of Angels. What therfore shall I vnworthy sinner, earth and ashes, be able to search and comprehend of so high and sacred a mystery?

2. O Lord in sincerity of hart, with a good and firme faith, & at thy commaundement, I come vnto thee with hope and reuerence, & doe verily belieue, that thou art heere present in the Sacrament, God and Man. Thy holy pleasure is, that I receaue thee, and by charity doe vnite my selfe vnto thee. Wherefore I doe recurre vnto thy Clemency, and doe craue speciall grace, that I may wholly melt in thee, and abound with loue, and heerafter neuer admit any externall comfort For this most high & worthy Sacrament, is the calth of the soule and body, the remedy of  
of

of all spirituall sicknes: by it my vices are cured, my passions bridled, temptations overcome or weakened, greater grace infused, vertue increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened, and charity inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, & still oftentimes doest bestow, many benefits in this Sacrament vpon thy beloued that receaue it deuoutly, my God the Protector of my soule, the strengthener of humane frailty, and the giuer of al inward cōfort. Thou impartest vnto them much comfort against sundry tribulations, and liftest them vp from the depth of their owne basenes, to the hope of thy protection, and doest inwardly refresh and illustrate them with a certaine new grace in such sort, that they who before Communion felt themselves, heauy and indisposed, afterwards being strengthened

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with heavenly meate and drinke, doe finde in themselves a great change to the better. Which thou doest so dispose to thy elect, that they may truly acknowledg, & patiently proue, how great their owne infirmity is, and what benefit and grace they receaue from thee. For they of themselves are cold, dull, and vndeuous; but by thee they are made feruent, agile, and full of deuotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly vnto the Fountaine of sweetnesse, doth not carry away frō thence at least some little sweetnesse? Or who standing by a great fire, receaueth not some small heate therby? Thou art a fountaine alwaies full & ouerflowing, a fire euer burning & neuer decaying.

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw at the full out of this fountaine, nor drinke my fill, I will notwithstanding set my lips to the  
mouth

mouth of this heavenly conduite, that I may draw from thence, at least some small drop to refresh my thirst, to the end I wither not wholly away and perish. And though I be not altogether celestial, nor so inflamed as the Cherubins & Seraphins, notwithstanding I will endeavour to apply my selfe to deuotion, and dispose my hart to obtaine some smal sparke of diuine fire, by humble receauing of this life-giuing Sacrament. And whatsoeuer is hereunto wanting in me, good Iesu, most blessed Sauour, doe thou supply for me, most benigne and gracious Lord, who hast vouchsafed to call vs vnto thee, saying: Come vnto me al yee that labour & are burdened, & I wil refresh you.

5. I labour in the sweate of my browes, I am vexed with griefe of hart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations,

*The following*  
 tations, I am intangled and oppressed with many euill passiōs, and there is none to help me, none to deliuer and saue me, but thou, Lord God, my Sauour, to whom I commit my selfe, & all mine, that thou maist keep me, and bring me to life euerlasting. Receaue me to the honour and glory of thy name, who hast prepared thy Body and Bloud to be my meate and my drinke. Graunt, Lord God, my Sauour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, my zeale and deuotiō may increafe.

*Of the dignitie of this Sacrament, and Priestly function.*

**The voice of the Disciple.**

**CHAPT. V.**

**I**F thou hadst angelical purity,  
 and the sanctitye of S. Iohn  
 Baptist,



Baptist, thou wert not worthe to receaue, nor handle this Sacrament. For it is not within the compasse of the deserts of men that man should consecrate and handle the Sacrament of Christ, and receaue for food the bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great is the dignity of Priests, to whome is graunted that, which is not permitted to the Angels. For Priests only instituted in the Church, haue power to celebrate, and consecrate the body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, vsing the wordes of God, by Gods commaundement, and appointment; but God is there the principall actour, and inuisible worker, to whom is subiect all that he pleaseth, and all that he commaundeth, doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore to giue more credit to God Almighty in this most excellēt Sa-

crament, then to thine owne  
seſe, or to any viſible ſigne. And  
therefore thou art to come vnto  
this Myſtery, with feare and re-  
uerence. Conſider attentiuely  
with thy ſelfe, what that is,  
whereof the Miniſtry is deliuered  
vnto thee by the imposition of  
hands of the Biſhop. Behould  
thou art made a Priſt, & confe-  
crated to ſay Maſſe: ſee now that  
in due time thou offer Sacrifice  
vnto God faithfully & deuout-  
ly, and carry thy ſelfe ſo, as thou  
maiſt be without reproſe. Thou  
haſt not lightned thy burthen,  
but art now bound with a ſtrai-  
ter band of diſcipline, and art  
obliged to a more perfect de-  
gree of ſanctity. A Priſt ought  
to be adorned with all kind of  
vertue, and to giue example of  
good life to others. His conuer-  
ſation ſhould not be according  
to the ordinary and cōmon pro-  
ceedings of men, but like to the  
Angels

Angels in heauen, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Priest clothed in sacred garments, is the Vicegerent of Christ, to pray humbly, & with a prostrate minde vnto God for himselfe and the whole people. He hath before and behind the signe of the Crosse of our Lord, to the end he may euer remember the Passion of Christ: he beareth the Crosse before him in the Vestement, that he may diligently behoulde the footstepps of Christ, and feruently endeauour to follow them. He is behinde marked with the crosse, that he may patiently suffer for God, whatsoeuer aduersities shall be layd vpon him by others. He beareth the crosse before, that he may lament his owne sinnes: and the same he hath also behind, that he may with a compassionate harte, bewaile the offences of

of others, and know that he is placed as a mediatur betweene God, and the sinner. Neither ought he to cease from praier & holy oblation, till he deserue to obtaine grace and mercy. When a Priest doth celebrate, he honoureth God, reioyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the liuing, giueth rest to the dead, and maketh himselfe partaker of all good deeds.

*An Interrogation of the exercise before Communion.*

*The voice of the Disciple.*

CHAPT. VI.

**W**Hen I weigh thy greatnes, O Lord, and my vnworthinesse, I tremble, and am confounded in my selfe. For if I come not vnto thee, I fly from life, and if I vnworthy intrude my selfe, I incurre thy displea.

displeasure. What therefore shal  
I doe my God , my helper, and  
my counsellour in necessity?

2. Teach me the right way,  
appoint me some brief exercise,  
sutable to this holy mystery of  
sacted Communion. For it is  
good for me to know , how I  
should reuerently and deuoutly  
prepare my hart vnto thee , for  
the profitable receauing of thy  
Sacramēt, or for the celebrating  
of so great & diuine a Sacrifice.

*Of the discussing of our owne  
conscience, and purpose  
of amendment.*

The voyce of the Beloued.

CHAPT. VII.

**A** Boue all things, the Priest  
of God ought to come to  
celebrate, handle, & receaue this  
Sacrament with great humility  
of



of harte, and lowly reuerence, with a full faith, and a Godly desire of the honour of the diuine Maieſty. Examine diligently thy conſcience, and to thy power, purge and clenſe it with true contrition, and humble confession: ſo as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdensome vnto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conſcience, & hinder thy free acceſſe to theſe heavenly myſteries. Repent thee of all thy ſinnes in generall, and in particuler bewaile thy daily offences. And if thou haſt time, confeſſe vnto God in the ſecret of thy harte, all the myſeries of thy diſordered paſſions.

2. Lament and grieue, that thou art yet ſo ſubieſt to ſenſuality, & ſo addicted to the world, ſo vnmortified in thy paſſiōs, ſo full of the morions of concupiſcence, ſo vnwatchful ouer thy  
out

our ward senses, so oftē intāgled  
with many vaine fantasies, so ve-  
hemently inclined to outward  
things, so negligent in the inte-  
riour, so prone to laughter and  
immodesty, so hard to teares &  
cōpunction, so prompt to ease &  
pleasures of the flesh, so dull to  
austerity & feruour, so curious to  
heare newes & see vaine sights,  
so slack to imbrace that which  
tends to thine owne humiliatiō  
and contempt, so couetous of a-  
boundance, so niggardly in gi-  
uing, so fast in keeping, so incō-  
siderat in speech, so vnbridled to  
silence, so loose in manners, so  
outragious in deedes, so greedy  
to meate, so deafe to the word  
of God, so hasty to rest, so slow  
to labour, so warchfull to tales,  
so drowsy to watch in the ser-  
uice of God, so hasty to the  
end thereof, so inconstant in  
attention, soe negligent in  
saying thy office, so yndeuous in  
saying

sayinge Masse, so dry in recea-  
uing, so quickly distracted, so  
seldome wholly recollected, so  
suddainly moued to anger, so  
apt to take displeasure against  
another, so prone to iudge, so  
seuere to reprehend, so ioyfull  
in prosperity, so weake in ad-  
uersitie, so often purposinge  
much good, and performinge  
little

3. These and other thy defects  
confessed, and bewailed with  
sorrow, & great dislike of thine  
owne infirmitie; make a firme  
purpose allwaies to amend thy  
selfe, and to goe forwardes in  
vertue. Then with full resigna-  
tion, and with thy whole will,  
offer thy selfe vp to the honour  
of my name, a perpetuall sacri-  
fice in the altar of thy hart, faith-  
fully committing thy body and  
soule vnto me, that thou maist  
so also deserue to come worthi-  
ly to offer sacrifice vnto God,  
and

and to receaue profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For there is no oblation more worthy, nor satisfaction greater, for the washing away of sinnes, then to offer vp our selues vnto God purely & wholly with the oblation of the Body of Christ in the Masse, and in Communion. And when a man shall haue done what lieth in him, and shall be truly penitent, as I liue, saith our Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be conuerted and liue, I will not remember his sinns any more, but they shall be all forgiven him, and fully pardoned.

Of the oblation of Christ on  
the Crosse, and resigna-  
tion of our selues.

The voice of the Beloued,

CHAPT. VIII.

**A**S I willingly offered vp  
my selfe vnto God my Fa-  
ther, with my hands stretched  
forth on the Crosse, and my bo-  
dy naked for thy sinnes, so that  
nothing remained in me that  
was not turned into a sacrifice,  
for the appeasing of the diuine  
wrath: so oughtest thou also to  
offer vp thy selfe willingly vnto  
me daily in the Masse, as a pure  
and holy oblation, with thy  
whole force, & desir, in as harty  
a manner as thou canst. What  
doe I require of thee more, then  
that thou resigne thy selfe who-  
ly vnto me? Whatsoeuer thou  
giue



giuest besides thy selfe, is of little accōpt in my sight, for I seek not thy gift, but thee.

2. As it would not suffice thee to haue all thinges whatsoever besides me; so neither can it please me whatsoever thou giuest, if thou offerest not vp thy selfe. Offer thy selfe vnto me, & giue thy selfe, & al that thou art, for God, and thy offering shall be gratefull. Behould I offered vp my selfe wholly vnto my Father for thee, & gaue my whole body, and bloud for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, & thou remaine mine. But if thou abidest in thy selfe, and doest not offer thy selfe vp freely vnto my will, thy oblation is not entire, neither shall the vnion betweene vs be perfect. Therefore a free offering vp of thy selfe into the handes of God, ought to goe before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtaine free-

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dome and grace. For this cause  
so few become inwardly illumi-  
nated, and enioy true liberty of  
harte, for that they doe not re-  
solue wholly to denye themsel-  
ues. My saying is vndoubtedlye  
true. Vlesse one forsake all, he  
cannot be my disciple. If thou  
therfore wish to be mine, offer  
vp thy selfe vnto me with thy  
whole desires.

*That we ought to offer vp our  
selues and all that is ours  
vnto God, and to pray  
for all.*

*The voice of the Disciple.*

CHAPT. IX.

**T**Hine, O Lord, are all thin-  
ges that are in heauen and  
in earth. I desire to offer vp my  
self vnto thee, as a free oblation,  
and to remaine alwaies thine. O  
Lord,

Lord, in sinceritie of my hart, I offer my self vnto thee this day, in sacrifice of perpetuall praise, to be thy seruant for euer. Receaue me with this holy oblation of thy precious body, which in the presence of the Angells inuisibly attendinge heere vpon thee, that it may be to the health of my soule, and the saluation of all thy people.

2. I offer vnto thee, O Lord, all my sinnes & offences, which I haue committed in the sight of thee, and thy holy Angels, frō the day wherein I first could sinne, to this houre, vpon thy holy altar: that thou maist consume and burne them all with the fire of thy charity, and wash out all the staines of my sinnes, and cleanse my conscience from all offence, and restore to me againe thy grace, which I lost by sinne, forgiving me al my offences, and receauing me merciful-

404. *The following*  
ly in the kisse of peace.

3. What can I doe for my  
sinns, but humbly confesse and  
bewaile them, and intreat al-  
waies for mercy without inter-  
mission? I beseech thee, heare  
me in thy aboundant mercy, whē  
I stand before thee my God. All  
my sinnes are very displeasing  
vnto me. I will neuer commit  
them any more, but I am sory,  
and will be sory for them as lōg  
as I liue, and am ready to doe  
penance, & to satisfy for them  
to the vttermost of my power,  
Forgiue me, o God, forgiue me  
my sinnes, for thy holy names  
sake: saue my soule, which thou  
hast redeemed with thy pre-  
cious Bloud. Behould I commit  
my self vnto thy mercy, I resigne  
my selfe ouer into thy hāds. Doe  
with me according to thy good-  
nesse, not according to my wic-  
kednes, & manifold iniquity.

4. I offer vp also vnto thee all  
what

of Christ. Lib. III. 405

whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maist amend and sanctify it, that thou maist make it grateful and acceptable vnto thee, and alwaies perfect more and more that which thou hast begun, and bring me also, who am thy slouthful and vnprofitable creature, to a good & blessed end.

s. I offer vp also vnto thee all the Godly desires of deuout persons, the necessities of my parēts & friends, my brethren & sisters, & of al those that are decre vnto me, & that haue done good either to my self or others for thy loue, & that haue desired me to say Masse & pray for them & all others, whether they be yet aliue, or already dead, that they al may receue the help of thy grace & cōfort, protection frō dāgers, deliuey frō paine, & being freed from al euils, may ioyfully giue



**406**      *The following*  
**worthy thanks to thee.**

6. I offer vp also vnto thee my prayers, and sacrifices, especiallie for them who haue in any thing wrōged, grieued, or flandered me, or haue done me any damage or displeasure, and for those also, whom I haue at any time griued, troubled, and scandalized by words, or deeds, wittingly, or at ynawares: that it may please thee to forgiue vs all our sinnes and offences, one against the other. Take, O Lord, from our harts all icalousy, all indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatsoever may hurt Charity, and weaken brotherly loue. Haue mercy, O Lord, haue mercy on those, that craue thy mercy: giue grace vnto them, that stand in need thereof, and graūt that we may be worthy to enioy thy grace, and attaine to life euerlasting, Amen.

*That*

*That the holy Communion is  
not lightly to be forborne.*

**The voice of the Beloued.**

**CHAPT. X.**

**T**Hou oughtest often to ha-  
ue recourse to the Fountai-  
ne of grace, and of diuine mer-  
cie, to the Fountaine of good-  
nesse, and of all piery, that thou  
maist be cured of thy sinnes and  
passions, and deserue to be made  
more strong and vigilant against  
all temptations and deceipts of  
the Diuell: The enemy knowing  
the greatest profit, and remedy  
to consist in the holy Commu-  
nion, endeauoureth by all mea-  
nes and occasions to withdraw  
and hinder faithfull and deuout  
persons from it.

2. Some when they purpose  
to receaue the sacred cōmunion,

suffer greatest assaults of the Diuell. For that wicked spirit (as is written in Iob) cometh amongst the sonnes of God, to trouble the with his accustomed malice & impiety, or to make the ouer fearfull & perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtile assaults, rake away their faith, to the end they may either altogether abstaine from this diuine food, or at least come vnto it with lesse deuotion. But there is no heed to be taken of his fraudes & malicious suggestions, be they neuer so filthy & hideous, but all is to be turned back vpon his owne head. We ought to contemne and scorne him miserable wretch, & not to omit the sacred communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining of deuotion, & a certaine anxiety for  
the

the making of our Confession hindreth vs. Follow in these occasions the counsell of the wise, and put away all anxiety & scruple, for it hindreth the grace of God, & ouerthroweth deuotiō. Omit not for euery small vexation of the mind which happeneth, to receaue this holy Sacrament, but go presently to confession, and willingly forgiue others, whatsoeuer offences they haue done against thee: and if thou hast offended any, humbly craue pardon, and God wil willingly forgiue thee.

4. What auaieth it to delay confession, and to defer receauing? Purge thy self with speed, spit out the venom presently, make hast to take a remedy, and thou shalt find it better, then if thou deferredst it long. If thou omittest it to day for this cause, perhaps to morrow some greater will fall out, & so thou maist  
be

be hindered a long time from these diuine mysteries, and become more vnfit. Stirre vp thy selfe, and shake off all heauinesse and slouch, with the greatest force and speed thou canst. For it profiteth nothing to continue long in disquietnes and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments, to withdraw thy selfe from the Saaraments. Yea it hurterth verye much to defer Communion long, for it is wont to breed a great and dangerous dulnesse. Alas, some cold and dissolute people, do willingly delay their confession, & doe therefore defer the sacred Cōmunion, least they should be bound to greater watch ouer themselves

5. O how little charity and weake deuotion haue they that so easily omit the receauinge of these holy mysteries! How happy is he and gratefull to God, who ordereth to his life, & keepeth



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peth his conscience in such puritie, that he may be ready and fit to communicate euerye daye, if it were conuenient and might be done without note! If any on sometimes abstaine of humility, or by reason of some lawful impediment, he is to be cōmended for the reuerence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedeth of coldnesse, he must stir him self vp, and doe what lieth in him, & God will prosper his desire, for the good will he hath to doe it, which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawfull hindrance doth happen, he must alwaies haue yet a good will, and louinge desire to communicate, and so shall he not loose the fruit of the Sacrament. For a deuout person may euery day and houre profitably and without let, receaue Christ spiritually: and yet on certaine dales, & at times appointed he ought to receaue Sacramen-

mentally with a reuerēd desire, the Body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honour and glory of God, then his owne comfort. For he communicateth mystically, and is inuisibly fed, as often as he deuoutly calleth to mind the mystery of the Incarnation, & the Passion of Christ, & is inflamed with his loue.

7. He that prepareth not himselfe, but when a feast draweth neere, and when custome compelleth him therunto, shall oftē be vnprepared. Blessed is he that offereth himselfe vp as an Holocaust, and burnt offering to our Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or cōmunicate. Be not too long nor too short, in saying Masse, but keep the accustomed māner of those, with whom thou liuest. Thou oughtest not to be tedious & troublesom to others, but to obserue the cōmō course, according to the appointment  
of

of Christ. Lib. III. 413

of thy Superiours: and rather  
frame thy selfe to the profit of  
others, then to thine own deu-  
otion or desire.

*That the Body of Christ, and  
the holy Scripture, are most  
necessarie vnto a faithfull  
soule.*

The voice of the Disciple.

CH. P. T. XI.

**O** Most sweet Lord Iesu,  
how great is the delight  
of a deuout soule that feasteth  
with thee in thy bāquet, where  
there is no other meate offered  
to be eaten, but thy self her only  
beloued, and most to be desired  
aboue all the desires of her hart.  
And verily it would be a great  
comfort vnto me, to powre out  
teares from the bottome of my  
hart in thy presence, & with de-  
uous

414      *The following*

uout Magdalen to wash thy feet  
with the teares of mine eyes.  
But wher is this deuotiō? Where  
is so plentifull shedding of holy  
teares? Surely in the sight of thee  
and thy holy Angels, my whole  
hart should be inflamed and dis-  
solue into teares for ioy. For I  
enioy thee in the Sacramēt real-  
lie present, although hidden vn-  
der another forme.

2. For to behould thee in thine  
owne diuine brightnesse, mine  
eyes woulde not be able to en-  
dure it, neither could the whole  
world stand in the clearnesse of  
the glory of thy Maiesty. Thou  
therfore prouidest for my weak-  
nesse, in that thou couerest thy  
selfe vnder the Sacrament. I doe  
reallye enioy and adore him,  
whom the Angels adore in hea-  
uen, but I, as yet for the time, in  
faith, they in his proper forme,  
and without shadow. I ought  
to be conuerted with the light of  
true

true faith, & to walke therin, vntill the day of euerlasting brightnesse breake forth, and the shadowes of figures passe away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the vse of Sacraments shal cease. For the blessed in heauēly glory, need not the remedy of Sacramēts, who reioyce without end in the presence of God, behoulding his glory face to face, and being transformed by his brightnesse into the brightnesse of the incomprehensible Deity, they tast the word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, & as he remaineth for euer.

3. Whilst I remember these thy wonderfull workes, all spirituall comfort whatsoeuer becometh very tedious vnto me: for that as long as I behould not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no accompt of whatsoeuer I see or heare in this life. Thou art my witnes, O God, that nothing  
can



416      *The following*

can comfort me, no creatur giue  
me rest, but thou my God, who  
I desir to behould euerlastingly.  
But this is not possible, whilst I  
remaine in this mortall life.  
Therefore I must frame my selfe  
to much patience, & submit my  
selfe to thee in all my desires.  
For thy Saints also, O Lord, who  
now reioyce with thee in the  
Kingdome of heauen, whilst  
they liued, expected in faith and  
great patience, the comming of  
thy glory. What they beleiued,  
I beleiue; what they hoped for,  
I expect; whither they are come,  
I trust I shall come by thy grace.  
In the meane time I will go for-  
ward in faith, strengthened by  
the examples of the Saints. I  
haue also deuout bookes for my  
comfort, & for the guide of my  
life, & aboue all these, thy most  
holy Body for a singular remedy  
and refuge.

4. For I perceau two things

to be chiefly necessary for me in this life, without which this miserable life would be insupportable vnto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this body, I acknowledge my selfe to stand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore giuen vnto me (weake creature) thy sacred Body for the refectiō of my soule and body, & hast set thy word as a light vnto my feet; without these two I could not well liue. For the word of God, is the light of the soule; and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. These also may be called, the two tables set on the one side & the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the table of the holy Altar, cōteyning the sacred bread, that is, the precious body of Christ: the other is of the diuine law, cōteyning holy doctrine, teaching true faith, & certainly leading to the part

of the Temple within the velle,  
 where are the Holy of Holies.  
 Thanks be vnto thee. Lord Ie-  
 sus, light of euerlasting light,  
 for thy table of holy doctrine,  
 at which thou seruest vs by thy  
 seruants the Prophets and Apo-  
 stles, and other Doctours.

5. Thanks be vnto the Crea-  
 tour and Redeemer of man,  
 who to manifest thy charity to  
 the whole world hast prepared  
 a greater supper, wherein thou  
 hast offered to be eaten, not the  
 mystical lambe, but thine owne  
 most sacred Body and Bloud, re-  
 ioycing all the faithful with thy  
 holy banquet, and replenishing  
 them to the full with thy hea-  
 uenly Cuppe, in which are all  
 the delights of heauen, and the  
 holy Angels doe feast with vs,  
 but with a more happy sweet-  
 nesse.

6 O how great and honou-  
 rable is the office of Priests, to  
 whom

heauen so beloued, as a deuout  
soule, to whom God himselſe  
commeth to feed her with his  
glorious flesh? O vnſpeakable  
grace! O admirable fauour! O in-  
finite loue ſingularly beſtowed  
vpon man! But what ſhall I giue  
vnto our Lord in returne of this  
grace, for ſo ſingular a charity?  
There is no other thing more  
gratefull that I am able to giue,  
then to beſtow my hart wholly  
on my God, and to vnite it per-  
fectly vnto him. Then ſhall all  
my bowells reioyce, when my  
ſoule ſhall be perfectly vnited  
vnto God. Then he wil ſay vnto  
me: if thou wilt be with me, I  
will be with thee. And I will an-  
ſwere him. Vouchſafe, O Lord,  
to remaine with me, and I will  
be with thee. This is my whole  
deſire, that my hart be vnited  
vnto thee.

*Of the feruent desire of some  
deuout persons to receaue  
the Body of Christ.*

**The voyce of the Disciple.**

CHAPT. XIV.

**O** How great is the store of  
thy sweetnesse. O Lord,  
which thou hast hidden for the  
that feare thee! When I remem-  
ber some deuout persons who  
come vnto thy Sacrament, O  
Lord, with great deuotion and  
affection, I am oftentimes con-  
founded, and blush within my  
selfe, that I come so negligently  
and coldly to thy Altar, to thy  
table of holy Communion: that  
I remaine so dry, and without  
spirituall motion or feeling, that  
I am not wholly inflamed in thy  
presence, my God, nor so earne-  
stly drawne and moued, as ma-  
ny deuout persons haue beene,  
who



of Christ. Lib. III. 425

soule desireth? And that no man may look vpon me, nor any creature moue me or respect me, but thou alone maist speake vnto me, and I to thee, as the beloued is wont to speak to his beloued, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I desire, that I may be wholly vnited vnto thee, and may withdraw my hart from all created things, and more and more, by sacred Communion and often celebrating, learne to tast of heauenly & euerlasting sweetnes. O Lord God, when shal I be wholly vnited and absorpt by thee, and altogether forgetfull of my selfe! thou in me, and I in thee, and so graunt vs both to continue in one.

2. Thou art my beloued, the choicest amongst thousands, in whom my soule hath takē pleasure to dwel all the dayes of her life. Thou art my peace-maker

426 *The following*

in whom is greatest peace, and truest, without whom is labour and sorrow, and infinite misery. Thou art a hidden God, and thy counsell is not with the wicked, but thy speech is with the humble and simple of hart. O Lord, how sweet is thy spirit, who to the end, thou mightest shew thy sweetnes towards thy children vouchsafest to feed the with the most delightfome bread which descendeth from heauen, and is full of all sweetnes. Surely there is no other Nation so great, that hath Gods approaching vnto them, as thou our God art present to all thy faithful, vnto whom for their daily comfort, and for the lifting vp of their harts to heauen, thou giuest thy selfe to be eaten and enioyed.

3. For what other nation is there so famous, as the Christian people? or what creature vnder heauen

of Christ. Lib. III. 419

whō it is graunted with sacred words to consecrat the Lord of Maieſty, with their lips to bleſſe him, with their hands to hou'd him, with their owne mouth to receauc him, and to adminiſter him to others! O how cleane ought to be thoſe hands! How pure that mouth! How holy the body! How vnſported the hart of the Priests, in whom the Author of purity ſoe oftē entreth! Nothing but holy, no word but chaſt and profitable, ought to proceed from the mouth of the Priest, which ſo often receaueth the Sacrament of Chriſt.

7. Simple and chaſt ought to be the eyes, that are wont to behold the body of Chriſt, the hands pure and liſted vp to heauen, that vſe to hādle the Creator of heauen and earth. Vnto the Priests eſpecially it is ſaid in the Law: Be ye holy, for that I your Lord God, am holy,

8. Assist vs (Almighty God) with thy grace, that we, who haue vndertaken the office of Priesthood, may serue thee worthily and deuoutly in all purity, and with a sincere conscience. And if we cannot liue in so great innocency as we ought to doe, graunt vs notwithstanding, in due māner to bewaile the sinnes which we haue committed, and in the spirit of humility, and sincere intention, to serue thee hereafter with more seruour.

*That he that is to cōmunicate,  
ought to prepare himselfe  
With great diligence.*

**The voyce of the Beloued.**

**CHAPT. XII.**

**I** Am the louer of purity, and the giuer of al sanctity. I seek a pure hart, and there is the place

who out of a vehement desire of receauing, and a feeling affection of hart, could not cōtaine themselves from weeping, but with the desire both of soule & body, they earnestly longed after thee, O God, the liuely fountaine, being not otherwise able to temper nor satisfy their hunger, but by receauing thy body with all ioy and spirituall greedinesse.

2. O most ardent faith of those persons, a probable argument of thy sacred presence. For these truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose hart burneth so within them, whilst thou, O blessed Iesu, walkest with them. Such desire and deuotion, so vehement loue and feruency, is oftentimes far off from me. Be mercifull vnto me good Iesu, sweet & benigne Lord, and graunt me thy poore needy creature, to feele sometimes



430      *The following*

times at least in this holy Sacrament, a little cordiall desire of thy loue that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodnesse increased, and that my charity once perfectly inflamed . after the tastinge of heauenly Manna , may neuer decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to giue me the grace I desire, & to visitt me in thy bounteous clemency with the spirit of feruour, when it shall please thee. For although I burne not with so great desire as those that are so especially deuoted vnto thee: yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to haue this great inflamed desire , praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy feruent louers, and be nūbred among them in their holy company.

*That*

to receaue som crumme or drop of grace. Thou hast need of me, not I of thee, neither comest thou to sanctify me, but I come to sanctify and make thee better. Thou comest that thou maist be sanctified by me, and vnited vnto me, that thou maist receaue new grace, and be stirred vp againe to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy hart with all diligence, and receaue thy beloued into thy soule.

4. But thou oughtest not on-ly to prepare thy selfe to deuotiō before Communion, but carefully also to conserue thy seife therein, after thou hast receaued the Sacrament. Neither is the carefull guard of thy selfe after, lesse exacted, then deuout preparatiō before. For a good guard afterwards, is the best preparation thou canst make for the obtaining againe of greater grace.

424 *The following*

because that mans mind becometh very indisposed, if he presently powre himselfe out to outward cōforts. Beware of much talke, remaine in some secret place; and enioy thy God. For thou hast him, whom all the word cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughtest wholly to giue thy selfe. that so thou maist liue heerafter, not in thy selfe, but in me, without all care.

*That a deuout soule ought to desire with her whole hart, to be vnited vnto Christ in the B. Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple.

CHAPT. XIIIE

**H**OW may I obtaine this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole hart vnto thee, and enioy thee as my soule

place of my rest. Make ready and adorne for me a great chamber, and I will make with thee the Pasche with my Disciples. If thou wilt haue me come vnto thee, and remaine with thee, purge the old leauen, and make cleane the dwelling of thy hart: shut out the whole world, and all tumult of vices: sit like a sparrow solitary vpon the house top, and thinke of thy offences in the bitterness of thy soule. For euery loue, prepareth the best and fairest roome for his beloued, and heerein is knowne the affection of him that intertaineth his beloued.

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the worth of no actiō of thine, is able to mak this preparation sufficiēt, although thou shouldest prepare thy selfe a whole yeare together, and thinke on nothing else, but of my mercy and Grace: only thou

art suffered to come to my table like a beggar inuited to dinner to a rich mā, who hath nothing else to returne him for his benefits, but to humble himselfe, & giue him thanks. Doe what lieth in thee, and do it diligently, not for custome, nor for necessitie, but with feare and reuerence, & harty affection receaue the body of thy beloued Lord & God, who vouchsafeth to come vnto thee. I am he that haue called thee, I haue commaunded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee, come and receaue me.

3. When I bestow the grace of deuotion on thee, giue thanks to God, for it is giuen thee, not for that thou deseruest it, but because I haue mercy on thee. If thou haue it not, but rather feele thy selfe dry continue in prayer, sigh and knock, and giue not ouer vntil thou deserue



*That the grace of deuotion is  
obtainned by humility and  
denial of our selues.*

**The voyce of the Beloued.**

CHAPT. XV.

**T**Hou oughtest to seeke the  
grace of deuotiō instantly,  
to aske it earnestly, to expect it  
patiently and confidently, to re-  
ceiue it ioyfully, to keepe it hū-  
bly, to worke with it diligently,  
and to commit the time and  
manner of this heauenly visita-  
tion to God, vntill it shall be his  
pleasure to come. Thou ough-  
test chiefly to humble thy selfe,  
when thou feelest inwardly lit-  
tle or no deuotion, and yet not  
to be too much dejected, nor to  
griue inordinately for it. God  
often giueth in a short moment  
that, which he hath long time  
denyed:

denied: he giueth sometimes in the ende that, which in the beginning of prayer he differred to graunt.

2. If grace should be alwaies presently giuen, and at hand euer with a wish, it could not be well indured by a weake man. Therefore deuotion is to be expected with good hope, & humble patience: yet impute it to thy self, and thy sinnes, when it is not giuen thee, or when it is secretly taken from thee. It is sometimes a smal matter that hindreth and hideth grace from vs, if it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt haue thy desire.

► 3. For presently as soone as thou giuest thy selfe to God, and seekest not this, nor that, for thine owne pleasure or will, but  
seest

setlest thy selfe wholly in me,  
thou shalt find thy selfe vnited  
vnto him, & quiet. For nothing  
will tast so well, and please thee  
so much, as the wil and pleasure  
of God. Whosoever therefore  
with a sincere hart directeth his  
intention to God, and purgeth  
himselfe from al inordinat loue,  
or dislike of any creature, shal be  
most fit to receaue grace, and  
worthy of the gift of deuotion.  
For our Lord bestoweth his  
blessings there, where he fin-  
deth his vessels empty. And how  
much the more perfectly one  
forsaketh these basest things, &  
dieth to himselfe by contempt of  
himself: so much the more spec-  
dily grace cometh, and entreth  
in more plentifully, & lifteth vp  
the hart that is free, to a higher  
state of grace.

4. Then shall he see, and a-  
bound, and wonder, and his hart  
shall be enlarged, because the  
Ec hand

hand of our Lord is with him,  
and he hath put himselfe wholly  
into his hand for euer. Behold  
so shall the man be blessed, that  
seeketh Almighty God with his  
whole hart, and taketh not his  
soule in vaine. This man deser-  
ueth great grace of diuine vniō,  
in receauing the holy Eucharist,  
for that he regardeth not his  
own deuotion and comfort, but  
about at deuotion and comfort,  
he prizeth the honour & glory  
of God.

*That we ought to manifest  
our necessities vnto Christ,  
and to craue his grace.*

**The voice of the Disciple.**

**CHAPT XVI.**

**O** Most sweet and louing  
Lord, whom I now desire  
to receaue deuously, thou know-  
est

est my infirmity, and the necessity which I endure, with how many sinnes I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, & defiled I come vnto thee for remedy, I craue of thee thy heavenly comfort, and the ease of my paine, I speake to him that knoweth all thinges, to whom all my secrets are open, and who can only perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what it is, wherof aboue all things I stand in most neede, & how poore I am in vertues.

2. Behould I stand before thee, poore and naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy: Refresh this thy hungry and needy creature, giue heate vnto my coldnesse, with the fire of thy loue: giue light vnto my blindnes, with the brightnesse of thy presence Turne al earthly things vnto me, into bitternesse, all things grieuous and contrary,

Ec 2

into



436      *The following*

into patiēce, all base and created things, into contempt and obliuion. Lift vp my hart to thee in heauen, and suffer me not to wander vpon earth. Be thou only sweet and delight some vnto me from henceforth for euermore, for thou only art my meate, & my drinke, my loue & my ioy, my delight & all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldest wholly inflame, burne, and change me into thee, that I might be made one spirit with thee, by the grace of inward vnion and melting of burning loue! Suffer me not to goe from thee hungry and dry, but deale mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What meruaile if I should be wholly inflamed by thee, and dy in my selfe, sith thou art fire burning, and neuer decaying, loue purifying the hart, and inlightening the

of Christ. Lib. III. 437  
the vnderstanding?

*Of burning loue, and vehemēt  
desire to receaue Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

CHAPT. XVII.

**W**ith great deuotion & burning loue, with most hartty affection and seruour I desire to receaue thee, O Lord, as many Saints and deuout persons haue desired thee, when they receaued thy Sacrament, who were most pleasing vnto thee in holinesse of life, and most feruent in deuotion. O my God, my euermourning loue, my whole good, my happinesse without end, I would gladly receaue with the most vehement desire, & worthy reuerence, that any of the Saints euermourning had, or could feele.

2. And although I be vnworthy to haue all those feelings of

Ec 3

deuo-

deuotion, yet I offer vnto thee the whole affection of my hart, as if I alon had those most sweet inflamed desires: yea whatsoeuer also a deuout mind can conceaue and desire, all that, with greatest reuerence, and most inward affection I offer & present vnto thee. I wish to desire nothing to my selfe, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my selfe and all mine vnto thee, my Lord God, my Creatour, and my Redeemer. I desire to receaue thee this day with such affectiō, reuerence, praise and honour, with such gratitude, worthinesse, and loue, with such faith, hope, & purity, as thy most blessed Mother the glorious Virgin Marie receaued, and desired thee. when she humbly and deuonly answered the Angel, who declared vnto her the mystery of thy Incarnation, and sayd: Behold the hand-maid of our Lord, lee

it be done vnto me according  
thy word.

3. And as thy blessed Fore-  
runner, the most excellent a-  
mongst the Saints Iohn Baptist,  
cherfully leaped with ioy of the  
holy Ghost, whilst he was yet  
shut vp in his mothers wombe:  
& afterwards seeing Iesus wal-  
king amongst men, humbling  
himself very much, said with de-  
uout affection: The friend of the  
Bridegrom that standeth & hea-  
reth him, reioyceth with ioy for  
the voice of the Bridegrome: so  
I also wish to be inflamed with  
great and holy desires, and to of-  
fer my selfe vp to thee with my  
whole hart. Wherefore I offer  
also, and present vnto thee the  
ioyes, seruient desires, excesses of  
mind, spirituall illuminations, &  
heavenly visions of all deuoute  
harts, with all the vertues and  
praises exercised, and to be exer-  
cised, by all creatures in heauen

440 *The following*  
and earth, for my selfe, and all  
such as are commended to me  
in prayer, that by all thou maist  
be worthily praised, & glorified  
for euer.

4. Receaue, my Lord God,  
the affections of my hart, and  
the desires of infinite praise  
and thanks, which according  
to the measure of thy vnspea-  
kable greatnesse, are due vnto  
thee. These I yield thee, and  
desire to yield thee euery day  
and moment, and I doe intreat,  
and inuite all the heauenly spi-  
rits, & all thy deuout seruants, to  
giue thanks and praises together  
with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes,  
and Tongues praise thee, & ma-  
gnify thy holy and sweet name  
with great ioy, and feruent de-  
uotion, and let all that reuerent-  
lye and deuoutly celebrate thy  
most high Sacrament, & receaue  
it with full faith, deserue to find  
grace,



*of Christ. Lib. III. 441*

grace, and mercy at thy hand,  
and pray humbly for me sinfull  
creature. And when they shall  
haue obtained their desired de-  
uotion and ioyfull vnion, & de-  
part from thy sacred heauenlie  
table, well comforted and mer-  
uailously refreshed, let the vou-  
chsafe to remember my poore  
and needy soule.

*That man be not a curious se-  
archer of this Sacrament,  
but an humble follower of  
Christ submitting his sense  
to faith.*

*The voice of the Beloued.*

*CHAPT. XVIII.*

**T**Hou oughtest to beware  
of curious and vnprofitable  
searching into this most profound  
Sacrament, if thou wilt not sink  
into the depth of doubt. He that  
is a seacher of Maiesty, shall be

*Eccl. 5. op.*

442     *The following*  
oppressed by glory. God is able  
to work more then man can vn-  
derstand. A pious and humble  
inquiry of truth is tolerable, so  
be be alwais ready to be taught,  
and doe endeaour to walke in  
the sound pathes of the ancient  
Fathers doctrine.

2. Blessed is that simplicity,  
that forsaketh the difficulte  
waies of questions, and goeth on  
in the plaine and assured path  
of Gods Cōmandements. Many  
haue lost deuotion, whilst they  
would search after high things.  
Faith and sincere life are exacted  
at thy hands, not height of vn-  
derstanding, nor the depth of the  
mysteries of God. If thou doest  
not vnderstand, nor cōceiue those  
things that are vnder thee, how  
shalt thou be able to comprehend  
those that are aboue thee? Sub-  
mit thy self to God, & let thy self  
be subiect to faith, & the light of  
knowledge shall be giue thee in  
that

of Christ. Lib. III. 443

that degree, as shal be profitable  
& necessary for thee

3. Some are grieuously tēpted  
about faith & the Sacramēt, but  
this is not to be imputed to thē,  
but rather to the enemy. Do not  
regarde nor dispute with thy  
thoughts, neither doe thou giue  
āswere to the doubts moued by  
the enemy, but beleue the words  
of God, beleue his Saints & Pro-  
phets, & the wicked Serpēt wil  
fly frō thee. It is oftentimes very  
profitable to the seruant of God  
to suffer such things. For he tēp-  
teth not Infidels & sinners, whō  
he already securely possesseth,  
but he sundry waies tempteth &  
vexeth the faithful & deuout.

4. Go forward therefore with a  
sincere & vndoubted faith, and  
come to the Sacrament with vn-  
faigned reuerēce. And whatsoe-  
uer thou art not able to vnder-  
stād, cōmit securely to Almighty  
God. God deceaue thee not: he

444. *The following &c.*

is deceaued that trusteth too much to himselfe. God walketh with the simple, reuealeth himselfe to the humble, giueth vnderstanding to little ones, openeth the senses of pure minds, & hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weake, & may be deceaued, but true faith cannot be deceaued.

3. Al reason and natural search ought to follow faith, not to go before it, nor impugne it. For faith & loue do chiefly excel, & worke in a hidden manner in this most blessed and excellent Sacrament. God, who is euerslasting, & of infinite power, doth great and inferutable thinges in heauen and in earth, & there is no searching of his wonderfull works. If the works of God were such, as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderfull and vnspcakable.

A. T. A;

A T A B L E O F  
the Chapters of this  
ensuing Booke.

*The first Booke.*

O F the Imitation of Christ,  
and contempt of all the  
vanities of the world, Chap. 1

Of the humble conceipt of our  
selues, chap. 2

Of the doctrine of truth, chap. 3

Of prudence, and foresight in  
our actions, chap. 4

Of the reading of holy Scrip-  
tures, chap. 5

Of inordinat desires, and affec-  
tions, chap. 6

Of flying vaine Hope and Pride,  
chap. 7

That too much familiarity is to  
be shunned, chap. 8

Of Obedience, and Subiection,  
chap. 9

Of the auoyding superfluity of  
words.



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of sinne, chap. 24  
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Of a good and peaceable man,  
chapt. 3

Of a pure mind and vpright in-  
tention,      chapt. 4

Of the consideratiō of ones self,  
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science,      chapt. 6

Of the loue of Iesus aboue all  
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*The*

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sweet

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FINIS





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